THE POTTER'S HOUSE





Around our Tables:
The Story of The Potter's House

Adams Morgan, DC

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HUMANITIES COUNCIL
OF WASHINCTON, DC

Since opening our doors in 1960, the story of The Potter's House has been entwined with that of Adams Morgan. Celebrating the neighborhood's gifts, as well as sharing in its struggles, this rustic church-run coffeehouse on Columbia Rd. grew into a vibrant center for activism, the arts, and community development. A permanent exhibit and accompanying digital catalog, *Around Our Tables: The Story of The Potter's House* offers a glimpse into the unique history of this Washington institution through the display and description of over 50 artifacts: photographs, newspaper articles, pamphlets, menus, and more.



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The vision for The Potter's House was born when Gordon and Mary Cosby spent the night above a noisy tavern in New England. Surmising that Jesus would have been more at home there than the staid church they had just visited, they began to imagine a place that would welcome everyone, Christian or not, to explore life's big questions. Members of The Church of the Saviour rallied around the idea, and The Potter's House soon became a reality. Reclaimed barn wood walls and candlelit white tablecloths set the scene. Specialty coffees and desserts drew in crowds for deeper conversations, some of which were broadcast on a weekly radio show. An artists guild curated rotating exhibitions and soon started a gift shop up the street to share their creative works. By the mid-1960's, The Potter's House had become a national phenomenon, spurring similar coffeehouses in churches and on campuses across the country.


PHOTOS BY HART CONWERTSHAWT

THE POTTER'S HOUSE OFFERS A DIFFERENT KIND OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY, SAY ITS SPONSORS

SOME CALL IT A COFFEE HOUSE

By ANNE BRADFORD

DON CAMPBELL

PATRONS CALL the Potter's House at 1656 Columbia road N.W. a coffee house. Don Campbell, a theological student and actor who will present excerpts from Broadway plays there for two weeks starting Tuesday, calls it a little theater. Artists, sculptors and photographers call it a gallery and folk singers find it a place to audition and be heard. And those who run it call it a "church-in-the-world."

Don't look for old-fashioned evangelism at the Potter's House. You won't find any there. Rather, you are apt to find:

Friendly volunteer waiters . . . a quick snack on the way to or from the movies . . . a room dim enough for hand-holding . . . entertainment . . . chess boards . . . art to view or buy . . . groups discussing books, philosophy, religion . . . or a climate for just thinking.

The Rev. Gordon Cosby, pastor of the non-denominational Church of the Saviour, first thought of a church-sponsored coffee house three years ago to provide "a place for serious talk for those who have written off the conventional church." Similar church-sponsored coffee houses have been established in Austin and Houston, Tex., Swarthmore, Pa., Bennington, Vt., and Lynchburg, Va.

The Potter's House has already held 30 art exhibits, established an art-lesson center at 1636 Connecticut avenue N.W. and presented more than a dozen plays, folk singing sessions and readings.

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The Potter's House derives its name from the Biblical passage found in Jeremiah 18:6: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter' saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel."●

The Potter's House is a serene setting for quiet conversation.

Teenagers find it an ideal place for a birthday party.

SUNDAY MAGAZINE, THE WASHINGTON STAR, FEBRUARY 17, 1963

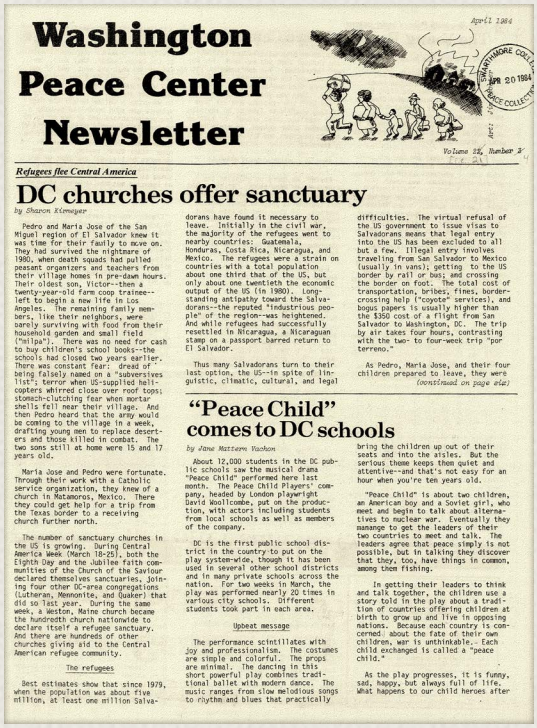
Inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, church members began to accompany the neglected children at Junior Village, a large city-run orphanage. Founding For Love of Children in 1965, they secured living alternatives for the youth there and eventually organized the institution's closure. Further awakened by the 1968 riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., The Potter's House began to connect more deeply with its African-American neighbors. Years of racially motivated disinvestment had begun to take their toll on the area, and hundreds of families were living in slum conditions while paying exorbitant rents. Building relationships across poverty and privilege, Jubilee Housing was formed in 1973 to rehabilitate the Mozart and Ritz apartments and ensure their affordability. Others buildings soon followed, along with an afterschool program and free health clinic for Jubilee residents and beyond.

Throughout the 1970's Adams Morgan was a swirling center of social activism and cultural change. Longtime neighborhood residents fought discrimination and displacement under the banner of Black Power. The Mayday Tribe planned massive anti-war actions from their communal house on Lanier Place. Those migrating from Latin America to Adams Morgan and nearby Mt. Pleasant brought their rich cultures with them, coming together annually for the highly attended Latino Festival. Reflecting these developments, programs at The Potter's House increasingly explored themes of liberation, solidarity, and care for the earth. Spanish-language nights were held regularly and the drumming often heard in Unity Park began to make its way inside our doors. While not without conflict, the church's vision of 'our people' was expanded beyond earlier boundaries, as Elizabeth O'Connor chronicled in her book The New Community.



In 1976 The Church of the Saviour dispersed into smaller churches, several of which came to call The Potter's House home. These churches would become important bases for community development and provide critical infrastructure in an era of decreased funding for the inner city. A number of direct service organizations emerged in the following decade. Jubilee Jobs provided a path to employment for those struggling to find work. L'Arche offered a human-centered alternative to institutionalization for those with intellectual disabilities. Sarah's Circle enabled Adams Morgan seniors to age in place. Christ House gave homeless men and women a place to rest and heal. Samaritan Inns supported those taking steps in their recovery from chemical addiction. Academy of Hope came alongside adult learners furthering their education. Founded at the height of the crisis, Joseph's House journeyed with those dying of HIV/AIDS.

Another call in the 1980s was accompanying the political and economic refugees fleeing the civil wars in Central America. The Family Place and Columbia Road Health Services became important touchstones for these travelers, providing support to young parents and medical care to those without official residency status. Risking legal sanction, Eighth Day and Jubilee Churches declared themselves Sanctuary communities and helped to mobilize the Pledge of Resistance in protest of US foreign policy throughout the region. Settling in the area, Salvadorans and others opened small businesses on Columbia Road and became The Potter's House's new neighbors.



Washington Peace Center Newsletter

April 1984

Volume XX, Number X

Refugees flee Central America

DC churches offer sanctuary

by Sharon Kleinbeyer

Pedro and Maria Jose of the San Miguel region of El Salvador knew it was time for their family to move on. They had survived the nightmare of 1980, when death squads had pulled peasant organizers and teachers from their village homes in pre-dawn hours. Their oldest son, Victor--then a twenty-year-old farm coop trainee--left to begin a new life in Los Angeles. The remaining family members, like their neighbors, were barely surviving with food from their household garden and small field ("milpa"). There was no need for cash to buy children's school books--the schools had closed two years earlier. There was constant fear: dread of being falsely named on a "subversives list"; terror when US-supplied helicopters whirred close over roof tops; stomach-clutching fear when mortar shells fell near their village. And then Pedro heard that the army would be coming to the village in a week, drafting young men to replace deserters and those killed in combat. The two sons still at home were 15 and 17 years old.

Maria Jose and Pedro were fortunate. Through their work with a Catholic service organization, they knew of a church in Matamoros, Mexico. There they could get help for a trip from the Texas border to a receiving church further north.

The number of sanctuary churches in the US is growing. During Central America Week (March 18-25), both the Eighth Day and the Jubilee faith communities of the Church of the Saviour declared themselves sanctuaries, joining four other DC-area congregations (Lutheran, Mennonite, and Quaker) that did so last year. During the same week, a Weston, Maine church became the hundredth church nationwide to declare itself a refugee sanctuary. And there are hundreds of other churches giving aid to the Central American refugee community.

The refugees

Best estimates show that since 1979, when the population was about five million, at least one million Salvadorans have found it necessary to leave. Initially in the civil war, the majority of the refugees went to nearby countries: Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Mexico. The refugees were a strain on countries with a total population about one third that of the US, but only about one twentieth the economic output of the US (in 1980). Long-standing antipathy toward the Salvadorans--the reputed "industrious people" of the region--was heightened. And while refugees had successfully resettled in Nicaragua, a Nicaraguan stamp on a passport barred return to El Salvador.

Thus many Salvadorans turn to their last option, the US--in spite of linguistic, climatic, cultural, and legal difficulties. The virtual refusal of the US government to issue visas to Salvadorans means that legal entry into the US has been excluded to all but a few. Illegal entry involves traveling from San Salvador to Mexico (usually in vans); getting to the US border by rail or bus; and crossing the border on foot. The total cost of transportation, bribes, fines, border-crossing help ("coyote" services), and bogus papers is usually higher than the $350 cost of a flight from San Salvador to Washington, DC. The trip by air takes four hours, contrasting with the two- to four-week trip "por terreno."

As Pedro, Maria Jose, and their four children prepared to leave, they were

(continued on page #16)

"Peace Child" comes to DC schools

by Jane Mattews Vachon

About 12,000 students in the DC public schools saw the musical drama "Peace Child" performed here last month. The Peace Child Players' company, headed by London playwright David Woollcombe, put on the production, with actors including students from local schools as well as members of the company.

DC is the first public school district in the country to put on the play system-wide, though it has been used in several other school districts and in many private schools across the nation. For two weeks in March, the play was performed nearly 20 times in various city schools. Different students took part in each area.

Upbeat message

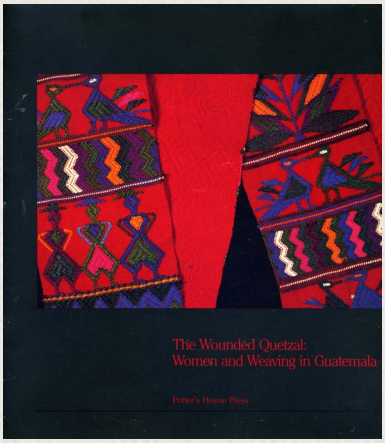
The performance scintillates with joy and professionalism. The costumes are simple and colorful. The props are minimal. The dancing in this short powerful play combines traditional ballet with modern dance. The music ranges from slow melodious songs to rhythm and blues that practically bring the children up out of their seats and into the aisles. But the serious theme keeps them quiet and attentive--and that's not easy for an hour when you're ten years old.

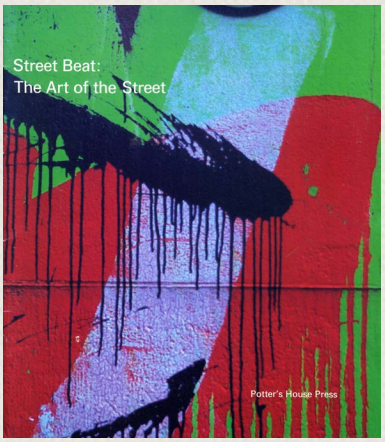
"Peace Child" is about two children, an American boy and a Soviet girl, who meet and begin to talk about alternatives to nuclear war. Eventually they manange to get the leaders of their two countries to meet and talk. The leaders agree that peace simply is not possible, but in talking they discover that they, too, have things in common, among them fishing.

In getting their leaders to think and talk together, the children use a story told in the play about a tradition of countries offering children at birth to grow up and live in opposing nations. Because each country is concerned about the fate of their own children, war is unthinkable. Each child exchanged is called a "peace child."

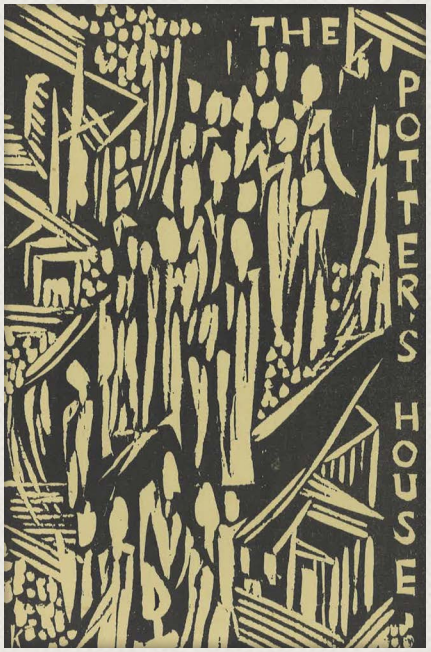
As the play progresses, it is funny, sad, happy, but always full of life. What happens to our child heroes after

Alongside these activist efforts came a renewed emphasis on the arts. Potter's House Press produced beautiful catalogs documenting Latino craft and local street art as well as the work of individual artists. Kerygma staged plays and readings while folk singers performed in the front of the coffeehouse. The art of hospitality, too, was practiced at The Potter's House. Longtime cook Mary Easley made everyone feel welcome with her sweet potato pie and other soul food favorites. This hospitality extended to all who entered our doors, regardless of their ability to pay, and The Potter's House became known as a safe space for those on the margins.





Throughout all the twists and turns over the past half-century in Adams Morgan, The Potter's House has provided a place where neighbors can become friends, ask big questions, and build movements. In a city whose name is synonymous with the plans of the powerful, it has sought to model a new way - one in which everyone's gifts are celebrated and shared for the good of all.



The Potter's House

1658 Columbia Road, N. W.
Washington D. C.

Coffee

RUSSIAN IMPERIAL—An exotic mixture of ice cream, coffee, and chocolate, topped with whipped cream 1.00

CAFFE ESPRESSO—The best known of all "foreign" coffees is this Italian version. Each cup freshly made in our own espresso machine ..... .30

CAFFE ROMANA—Espresso Coffee with twist of lemon peel ..... .35

CAPPUCCINO—Italian coffee combined with steaming milk and served with whipped cream and a sprinkle of cinnamon ..... .50

AMERICAN—Our own Potter's House blend ..... .25

MOCHA JAVA—A happy combination of hot coffee and chocolate ..... .55

VIENNESE—The Viennese always enjoy their world-renowned coffee with a drift of Schlagober, which is Viennese for whipped cream ..... .50

TURKISH COFFEE—Heaping teaspoons of imported Turkish coffee boiled in three stages and served in special Turkish Ibriks ..... .50

CAFE AU LAIT—Black coffee and hot milk as you have on the French Riviera ..... .50

SANKA ..... .30

ICED POTTER'S HOUSE COFFEE ..... .35

Other Beverages

ROYAL CHOCOLATE—Made with finest imported chocolate, topped with grated orange and whipped cream .... .50
ORANGE JUICE—Tall Glass ..... .50
ORANGE FREEZE—Pure orange juice with sherbet ... .65
PINEAPPLE SWIRL—A long, cold Tropical Drink ..... .75
FROSTED CHOCOLATE ..... .55
MILK ..... .30

Tea

DARJEELING—Grown high in the Himalayas ..... .40
OOLONG-FORMOSA—A lightly fermented tea ..... .40
CONSTANT COMMENT—An American favorite, delicately flavored with oranges and sweet spice ..... .40
Tea is served in a pot with lemon or cream
ICED TEA ..... .30

Sandwiches

Delicious imported ham on rye or pumpernickel bread ... .95
Cream cheese on date and nut bread ..... .75
Assorted Danish Plate ..... .85
Imported Swiss Cheese on rye ..... .60

Pastries

Your selection from our French and Eastern pastry trays .50
RICH CAKE ..... .35
APPLE PIE ..... .40
a-la-mode or with cheese ..... .50
DELICIOUS CHEESE CAKE—light and fluffy ..... .75

Cheeses

CAMEMBERT ..... .45
CHEDDAR ..... .35
GOUDA ..... .45
BLEU CHEESE ..... .45
CREAM CHEESE ..... .40
All cheeses served with bread or crackers

Desserts

ICE CREAM—Vanilla, Chocolate, Coffee, or Pistaschio .40
Served with Chocolate, Butterscotch or Nut topping .50
SHERBET—Lemon or Raspberry ..... .35
PARFAIT—Raspberry or Pineapple Mint ..... .75
SPUMONI ..... .45
BISCUIT TORTONI ..... .45

The Potter's House

The Potter's House is to provide a place of meeting between persons. This is an age that has produced volumes on the need for real communication, while providing little opportunity for the experiencing of it. Complacency, mediocrity, conformity, quest for security, have all been listed as symptoms of the sickness that plagues the 20th century and the absence of genuine dialogue as the basic underlying cause. This dialogue can take place through words, art and music, as two or three meet over coffee.

Exhibits

We hope that you will come to consider The Potter's House as an addition to Washington's growing community of stimulating galleries. In the future, The Potter's House Gallery will make its facilities available to up-and-coming artists in the various areas of the fine arts. For further information write care of The Potter's House. All work juried.

Hand Crafts

We anticipate that a guild will spring from The Potter's House community—a contemporary counterpart of the medieval guild. Members would share the common goal of making relevant and meaningful their forms of art expression. Articles are available through The Potter's House.

The Potter's House Workshop is in operation at 1634 Conn. Ave., N.W. Courses, based on a semester plan, are offered for public participation.

Plays

From time to time short plays will be presented for your discussion of the issues and questions they may raise. They will be plays which have spoken to us, and that we hope will speak to you. Some will express the convictions of The Potter's House while others may be at variance with these convictions. The actors are not professionals, but persons from many walks of life.

Hours and Days

The Potter's House is open Tuesday through Saturday from 8:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. Sunday from 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

The Name

The Potter's House takes its name from an old biblical story in which a prophet was directed to go down to the potter's house. There he watched the potter at his work, saw how the clay was spoiled in his hand and then used again to make a vessel that seemed good to him. As the prophet watched, he heard a voice saying, "Can I not do with you as the potter has done? Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand."

Original Menu, 1960



Crowds gather to attend the 'Coffeehouse Congregation.' 1965

COVER STORY



Typical scene in the Potter's House, an Old World-style haven in Washington where people may dine, relax and contemplate.

Evangelism in a Coffee House

By ANNE BRADFORD

Contributing Writer

WHEN 17-year-old Jean Carter was explaining to her mother where she and her date had gone after coming out of a movie house in uptown Washington, she said:

"We went to a high-class beatnik joint."

But a woman from the West Coast visiting there one night called the wood-paneled, candlelit restaurant at 1658 Columbia road N.W. "the most beautiful coffee house I've ever been in."

Other patrons speak of the "unusual atmosphere . . . something more than a summation of art-lined walls, hi-fi music, gourmet food and exotic coffees."

These remarks are typical of the public's reaction to "The Potter's House," a European-type coffee house opened last Spring by the Church of the Saviour as a venture in untraditional evangelism.

Credit for the idea goes to the Rev. Gordon Cosby, a 43-year-old minister who, as a chaplain with the 101st Airborne Division, was twice awarded the bronze star for battlefield action in Normandy and during the siege at Bastogne.

Last winter, when he and his wife returned to their upstate New York hotel room after he had preached a guest sermon in what Mrs. Cosby describes as "a dismal church before a shivering congregation," they heard from below the sound of a tavern jukebox and happy chatter.

"If Jesus of Nazareth had his choice," the minister told his wife, "he would probably have come to the tavern rather than to the church we visited."

Mr. Cosby's congregation at 2025 Massachusetts avenue N.W. adopted his idea to provide Washington with a conversation-and-arts center. He envisioned a place "for serious talk for those who have written off the conventional church."

Church members who donate one or two nights of work each week serve as waiters, hosts, and makers of coffee and sandwiches. They cater to a steady flow of customers.

"We are glad to be clearing expenses," says Mrs. Esther Dorsey, a church member who gave up her government job of 19 years to manage the project. "But we're not a money-making venture. We're trying to be a church-in-the-world. We feel more effective when the atmosphere is casual, relaxed—and we're not overly busy."



Guest tries her hand at a potter's wheel.

The restful old-world interior was created by church members who worked many hours installing wood-paneled walls, cork-style floors, recessed lights, a brick-walled serving counter, garden-style pool splashed with cascading water, and draw drapes for the large store-front windows. A church member who now lives in West Virginia made the 26 walnut-finished tables and the kitchen cabinets. Another member, now living in New York, made and installed the hi-fi set. A restaurant chain owner in Cleveland donated some of the kitchen equipment.

An evening's program occasionally features poetry reading or plays.

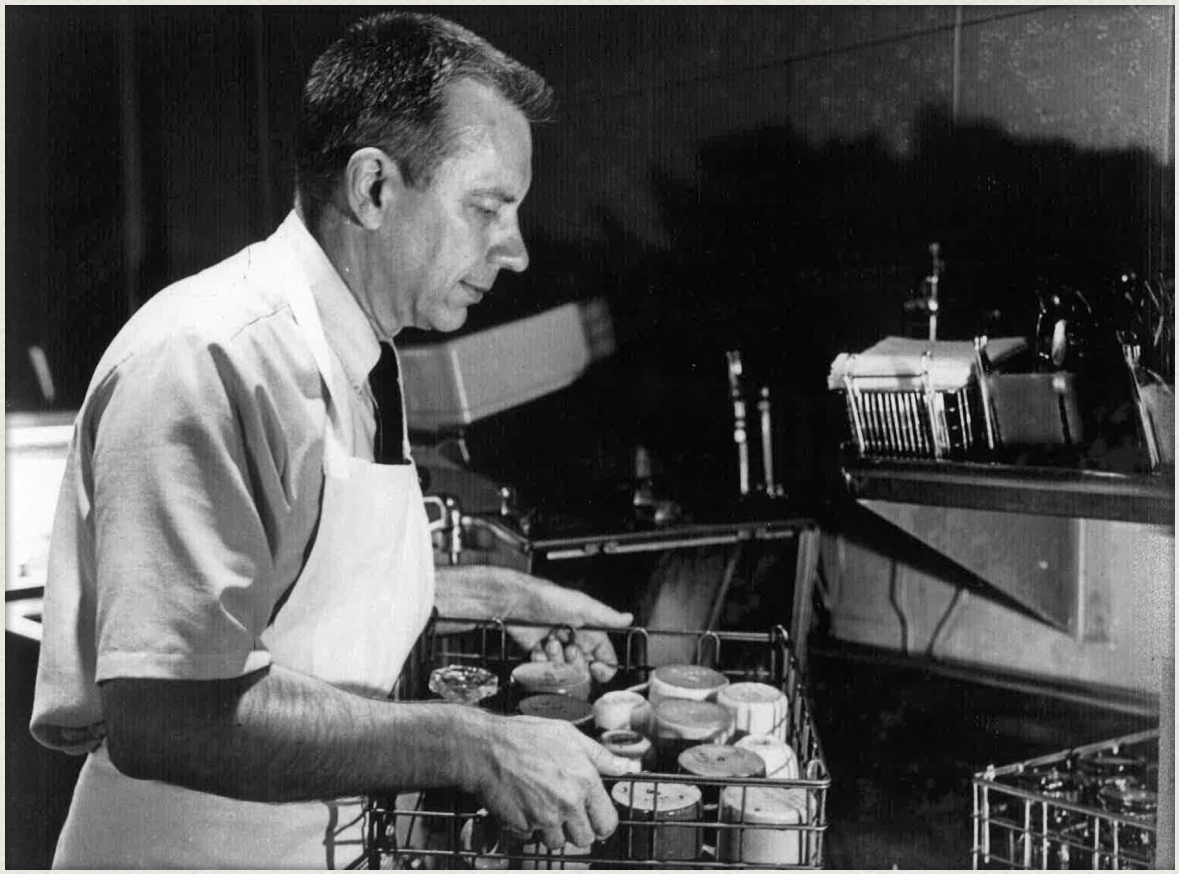
"Great art and drama were born in the church," Mr. Cosby points out, "and we think it fitting that the 20th century church also sponsor such creativity."

All ages, races and walks of life come in—students, older folk, government workers, after-theater groups, ministers, foreigners who can barely speak English as they ask for Espresso or Viennese coffee. Some ask philosophical questions of the waiters; others engage in strictly private tete-a-tetes or browse in the book corner.

"I have never seen anything like this anywhere else in America," said a young Swedish graduate student recently. After finishing a year's engineering studies in Canada, and with only one day left before his boat sailed, he'd come upon some pictures of The Potter's House in a national magazine. Down he came to look the place over.

It was a Friday night. In one corner, a potter was shaping bowls on the potter's wheel; in another, a university instructor softly improvised on the piano. At a small table in the rear, a boy and a girl bent over a chess board. Briefly, and because it was the time of

"Some Call it a Coffeehouse," The Washington Star, 1963



Gordon Cosby washing coffee mugs at The Potter's House, mid-1960s



Sketch of The Church of the Saviour Headquarters at 2025 Massachusetts Ave. NW



Mary Cosby shares her vision of church renewal, mid-1970s

PHOTOS BY HART COWPERTHWAIT



The Potter's House is a serene setting for quiet conversation.



DON CAMPBELL



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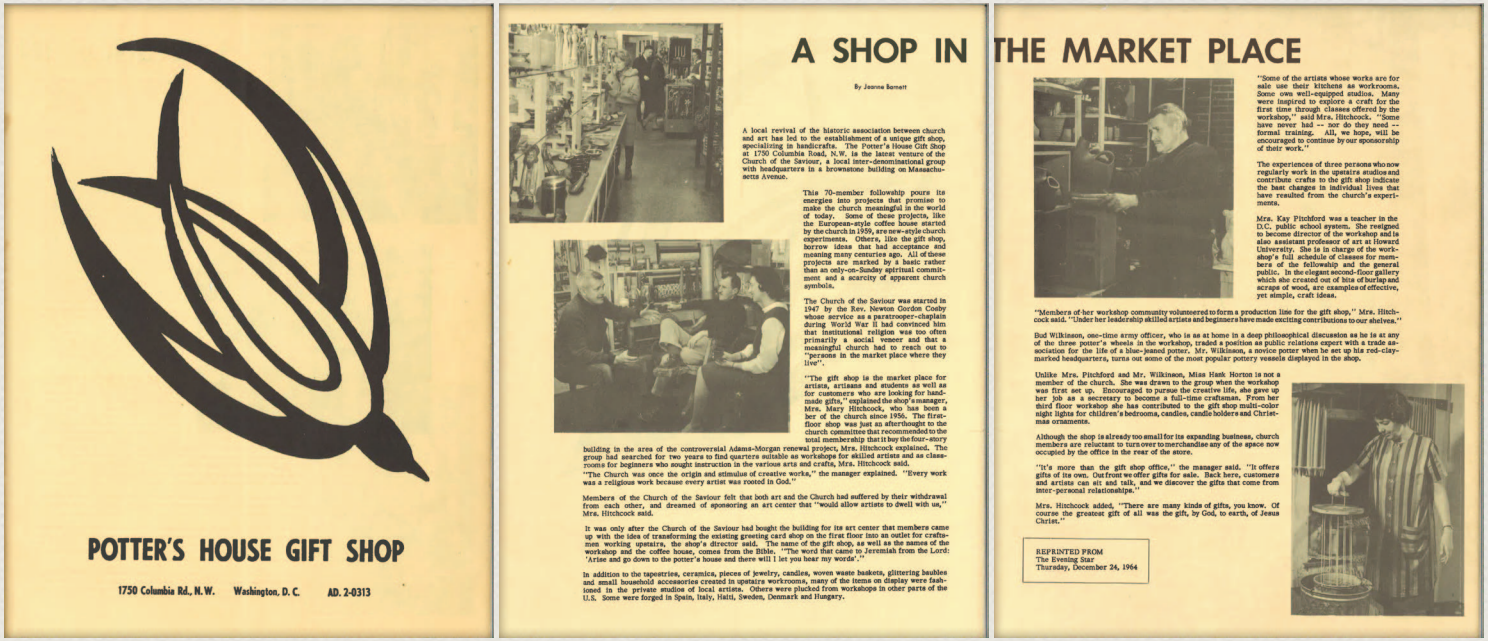
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"Some Call it a Coffeehouse," The Washington Star, 1963



The Lodge of the Carpenter at Dayspring



POTTER'S HOUSE GIFT SHOP

1750 Columbia Rd., N.W. Washington, D.C. AD. 2-0313

A SHOP IN THE MARKET PLACE

By Jeanne Barnett

A local revival of the historic association between church and art has led to the establishment of a unique gift shop, specializing in handicrafts. The Potter's House Gift Shop at 1750 Columbia Road, N.W. is the latest venture of the Church of the Saviour, a local inter-denominational group with headquarters in a brownstone building on Massachusetts Avenue.

This 70-member fellowship pours its energies into projects that promise to make the church meaningful in the world of today. Some of these projects, like the European-style coffee house started by the church in 1959, are new-style church experiments. Others, like the gift shop, borrow ideas that had acceptance and meaning many centuries ago. All of these projects are marked by a basic rather than an only-on-Sunday spiritual commitment and a scarcity of apparent church symbols.

The Church of the Saviour was started in 1947 by the Rev. Newton Gordon Cosby whose service as a paratrooper-chaplain during World War II had convinced him that institutional religion was too often primarily a social veneer and that a meaningful church had to reach out to "persons in the market place where they live".

"The gift shop is the market place for artists, artisans and students as well as for customers who are looking for handmade gifts," explained the shop's manager, Mrs. Mary Hitchcock, who has been a ber of the church since 1956. The first-floor shop was just an afterthought to the church committee that recommended to the total membership that it buy the four-story building in the area of the controversial Adams-Morgan renewal project, Mrs. Hitchcock explained. The group had searched for two years to find quarters suitable as workshops for skilled artists and as classrooms for beginners who sought instruction in the various arts and crafts, Mrs. Hitchcock said.

"The Church was once the origin and stimulus of creative works," the manager explained. "Every work was a religious work because every artist was rooted in God."

Members of the Church of the Saviour felt that both art and the Church had suffered by their withdrawal from each other, and dreamed of sponsoring an art center that "would allow artists to dwell with us," Mrs. Hitchcock said.

It was only after the Church of the Saviour had bought the building for its art center that members came up with the idea of transforming the existing greeting card shop on the first floor into an outlet for craftsmen working upstairs, the shop's director said. The name of the gift shop, as well as the names of the workshop and the coffee house, comes from the Bible. "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 'Arise and go down to the potter's house and there will I let you hear my words'."

In addition to the tapestries, ceramics, pieces of jewelry, candles, woven waste baskets, glittering baubles and small household accessories created in upstairs workrooms, many of the items on display were fashioned in the private studios of local artists. Others were plucked from workshops in other parts of the U.S. Some were forged in Spain, Italy, Haiti, Sweden, Denmark and Hungary.

"Some of the artists whose works are for sale use their kitchens as workrooms. Some own well-equipped studios. Many were inspired to explore a craft for the first time through classes offered by the workshop," said Mrs. Hitchcock. "Some have never had -- nor do they need -- formal training. All, we hope, will be encouraged to continue by our sponsorship of their work."

The experiences of three persons who now regularly work in the upstairs studios and contribute crafts to the gift shop indicate the best changes in individual lives that have resulted from the church's experiments.

Mrs. Kay Pitchford was a teacher in the D.C. public school system. She resigned to become director of the workshop and is also assistant professor of art at Howard University. She is in charge of the workshop's full schedule of classes for members of the fellowship and the general public. In the elegant second-floor gallery which she created out of bits of burlap and scraps of wood, are examples of effective, yet simple, craft ideas.

"Members of her workshop community volunteered to form a production line for the gift shop," Mrs. Hitchcock said. "Under her leadership skilled artists and beginners have made exciting contributions to our shelves."

Bud Wilkinson, one-time army officer, who is as at home in a deep philosophical discussion as he is at any of the three potter's wheels in the workshop, traded a position as public relations expert with a trade association for the life of a blue-jeaned potter. Mr. Wilkinson, a novice potter when he set up his red-clay-marked headquarters, turns out some of the most popular pottery vessels displayed in the shop.

Unlike Mrs. Pitchford and Mr. Wilkinson, Miss Hank Horton is not a member of the church. She was drawn to the group when the workshop was first set up. Encouraged to pursue the creative life, she gave up her job as a secretary to become a full-time craftsman. From her third floor workshop she has contributed to the gift shop multi-color night lights for children's bedrooms, candles, candle holders and Christmas ornaments.

Although the shop is already too small for its expanding business, church members are reluctant to turn over to merchandise any of the space now occupied by the office in the rear of the store.

"It's more than the gift shop office," the manager said. "It offers gifts of its own. Out front we offer gifts for sale. Back here, customers and artists can sit and talk, and we discover the gifts that come from inter-personal relationships."

Mrs. Hitchcock added, "There are many kinds of gifts, you know. Of course the greatest gift of all was the gift, by God, to earth, of Jesus Christ."

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Thursday, December 24, 1964

Potter's House Gift Shop Brochure, 1964

That's How Artist Catches LBJ, Too

LBJ Catches Art Show

VICE PRESIDENT Lyndon Johnson made a bronze caricature of his hectic career come to vibrant life Monday night when he stepped off a plane from Texas and had his chauffeur drive him straight to an art exhibition.

The caricature, showing LBJ somewhat breathlessly on the run, was the first work of art he saw beneath the beam of a spotlight as he walked in the door of the Potter's House Gallery at 1658 Columbia rd. shortly after 9 p. m.

Washington sculptress Jimilu Mason was circulating among her other guests attending the opening of her exhibition of sculpture when she spotted the Vice President enter unobtrusively. She was the only person who recognized him.

"Why, you came," she said happily. "How wonderful of you."

"I came straight from the plane that brought me from Texas," said the Vice President.

He then insisted that she personally escort him to each of the 50 or so heads of Senators, Congressmen, Supreme Court Justices and children which will be on display through Nov. 3. He admired each and everyone, but ended up by saying:

"But I still like mine the best."

The Vice President spent a good 20 minutes at the coffee house gallery before he took off for home after what had been a very long day, of course. He had left Lady Bird Johnson back in Texas. He arrived at the art gallery accompanied by Rep. Homer Thornberry (D-Tex.).

JUST LAST WEEK, the artist who is best known simply as Jimilu, visited the Vice President's office to borrow the caricature of him which she did in 1959 when he was then a Senator. She did the caricature because she never was able to get him to sit still long enough to do a full scale bust of him for which she had been commissioned.

He had won the Senatorial pool for coming closest to the score of the opening game of the World Series that year. The prize was a bust by Jimilu.

"He was always on the run or on the telephone," said Jimilu. "I could never get him to sit still long enough, so I decided to do a caricature of him, showing him just as I found him."

Last week in his office, the first thing the Vice-President wanted to know was this:

"Say, when am I ever going to get that bust that you promised me?"

"As soon as you can sit still long enough for me to do the clay model," she told him.

AT LAST she's got a date. LBJ has promised to sit still long enough for the sculptress to get to work right after the November congressional elections.

Jimilu, who is a charming, slender, and beautiful young woman as well as a talented one, greeted her father at the start of her one-woman show. He is Washington Attorney Lowell Mason, who was formerly with the Federal Trade Commission.

The exhibition will continue Tuesday through Sundays from 8 p. m. to midnight through Nov. 3. Potter's House Gallery and Coffee House is usually closed on Monday evenings except on such special occasions as last night's preview.

"LBJ Catches Art Show," The Washington Post, 1962



The Church of the Saviour at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, 1963

For Love Of Children:



A Washington Christmas Story

By Vivian Yudkin

"We have often noted that youths in institutions see themselves as problem free; they are no longer able to recognize the distant tensions and pressures of family, school and community. The major characteristics associated with institutional care are: general intellectual retardation, retardation in language functions, and social and personality disturbances centering around the capacity to establish and maintain close personal relationships."

– D.C. Crime Commission Report, 1966

Returning from the Selma, Ala., march in 1965, Gordon Cosby, minister and founder of the ecumenical Church of the Saviour at 2025 Massachusetts ave. nw., issued a challenge from the pulpit to members of the congregation to "find a handle to lift up the city's problems."

And so was born the organization called "For Love of Children." From the scores who were drawn by Cosby's fiery invitation to attend a first meeting, a dozen or so remained to form the nucleus of a group now numbering around 80. Its openly avowed goal is to "get the kids out of Junior Village."

Seeking one Washington microcosm which housed under one roof every ill which had operated in the "Selma situation," FLOC found its answer in the District of Columbia's institution for homeless, neglected and unwanted children. Poor housing, lack of jobs, lack of education, inadequate job training, inability to care for dependent children– these were only some of the conditions which had plagued hundreds of children (at this date 161 are 6 years of age and under) into circumstances which, try as Junior Village might to remedy them, are still a blot on the conscience of humanity.

FLOC does not believe that the answer to Junior Village is to make the place bigger and better. FLOC is founded upon the belief that each child is entitled to a home. An institution, no matter how seemingly adequate is not the answer.

And so, after that first FLOC meeting, Claude Ford returned to his home in Silver Spring and said to his wife, Yolande, "Guess what Gordon Cosby said to me?"

Continued on page 10



Mrs. Ford



Bobbie Barrett and Dorothy Spencer

Yolande Ford

The first director of FLOC is a quick, nervously alive, clear-thinking woman of 38, a graduate of Howard University (M.A. in Art History) and for several years a teacher of art at Cardozo High School. Her husband, Claude, is Chief Hospital Design Director at the Veterans Administration.

Yolande in dark slacks and bright jersey blouse, her vivid face ever changing expression, talked of those first times when she and others of FLOC went through the city knocking on door after door, asking for homes for children. "In those days we were naive. We left it to the Welfare Department to find homes. We thought they would be more co-operative." But the Welfare Department threw down the gauntlet: "'You bring us 400 applications,' they said. They thought we weren't serious. But they didn't understand our thinking and they still don't. We began to advertise, through the papers, on the radio. We passed the word along through churches, clubs, unchurched people, and we knocked on those doors, taking our own children with us. 'Hello,' we'd say, 'I'm from FLOC. We are looking for homes for children.'"

People in more affluent sections of the city donated money, or the ladies said they would take it to their Church Circle. Among the poor the response was more personal. "They'd say, 'Bless you, honey, it needs to be done.' Or, 'Our Pastor told us how Sister so and so was forced to give up one of *her* children.' Or, 'We wish we could.' Or, 'Come on in through my house, I have space; some child could sleep here.'"

Many who had tried to take a child into their homes before had come up against the stringent rules of the Welfare Department and were dubious. "I have tried, but the Welfare says you have to have 50 square feet of space for each child, and no enclosed back porch."

"All FLOC meant to welfare was an extra work load, and you can't blame them," said Yolande. "To them it's someone who has to sit at a desk and answer application after application. We brought them their 400 applications at the end of a year and out of these they only looked at a few, very, very few. They didn't have the time to process them, even though FLOC offered to screen any person they wished to name. FLOC offered to do all that delving into the past, present and future which is necessary, but they were still unsympathetic."

Recently FLOC scored a victory when the Welfare Department loosened its ban on single women as foster parents. For the first time in Washington it allowed two single women to adopt five Junior Village children. Two teachers and FLOC members, Dorothy Spencer, 38, Bobbie Barrett, 32, bought a four-bedroom house for themselves and their new family. Miss Spencer continues to teach at Woodrow Wilson High, but Miss Barrett, with a salary as full-time house parent from FLOC, stays home with the children.

As a result of her work with FLOC, Yolande Ford was recently asked by Headstart to be a consultant to them. They want to find out from Yolande what makes FLOC tick. "Not only Headstart," Yolande laughed. "The bureaucratic structure wants to know, the political structure wants to know, the conventional church structure wants to know . . ."

"A Washington Christmas Story," The Washington Post POTOMAC, 1967



Terry Flood joins in the renovations at Jubilee Housing, 1974

HOW THE JUBILEE COMMUNITY BUILT A NEW ENVIRONMENT HERE



—Washington Star Photographer Willard Volz

Rosa Smith, resident manager of the "Ritzart," calls it a building full of love.

Volunteers Contributed 60,000 Working Hours

By Earl Byrd
Washington Star Staff Writer

As the youngest daughter of a poor Southern sharecropper, Rosa Smith lived with her family in a shack while "the white owner lived on the hill in a pretty house."

During the first 20 years of her life, she never met a white person she liked. She never dreamed she'd see a day when white folks would try to make life better for her.

That was before she found out that a building full of love could change lives, feelings and opinions.

She thought of that recently while attending a Jubilee Community "Ritzart Saturday Work Party" in the apartment of an elderly black woman in Northwest Washington.

Surrounded by white people up to their elbows in soapsuds, Rosa Smith could hardly suppress her amazement. Stopping to pass a paint brush, she looked around again in wonder, rubbed at the paint on her nose and began scraping harder at the old plaster on the wall of the six-story ghetto tenement building.

JUBILEE COMMUNITY was born in November 1973 with the purchase of two old 90-unit apartment buildings: The Ritz at 1631 Euclid St. NW and the Mozart at 1630 Fuller St. NW.

This is the story of Jubilee Community. It is an unusual tale because it is a positive story about the inner city and how a group of its residents have successfully banded together to save the buildings they live in. Two articles accompanying this one (on Page C-7) give further insights into the Jubilee story: One looks at a devoted Jubilee employe, and the other tells about a nearby apartment building, more typical because the tenants frequently complain of landlord neglect.

They are neighboring buildings which have become known collectively as the "Ritzart."

The buildings were purchased by Washington's Church of the Saviour and members of the church then formed Jubilee Housing Inc. which undertook the renovation.

The buildings were bought to provide housing for poor people and to give them hope while letting them rediscover themselves by helping them to influence the environment in which they live.

Jubilee Housing Inc. has rehabilitated the "Ritzart" with the help of concerned citizens and members who have contributed 60,000 volunteer working hours.

It offers below-market rent (not more than $200 per month for three-bedroom units), provides social support programs and has set up a tenant ownership plan under which residents will become property shareowners when the buildings become cooperatives in December.

When Rosa Smith and her children, Michael, 13, Sheila, 11, Rena, 10, and Tracy, 9, moved into the Ritz in 1969, she found the conditions "intolerable" and was forced to move within a year.

"The roaches were so bold you didn't dare leave the kitchen table," she said. "If you did, by the time you got back they would be crawling all over your food — eating right out of your plate.

"And there were fires here four or five times a week because in those days garbage was everywhere. In the halls, on the steps . . . all you had to do was strike a match and there was a fire.

"ONCE THERE was a fire down the hall from me and it was three months before anyone came to remove the soot and paint our apartment. It was the only time I saw the former owner. He came by to apologize.

"There was crime, the elevators never worked and I just couldn't take it any more — I'm afraid of *big* rats," said the 29-year-old mother, holding out her hands to approximate 10 to 18 inches.

So Rosa Smith took her children and moved to California Street, and then to 49th Street in Northeast. She got a divorce, went on welfare, and then moved to a small apartment in the 1300 block of Fairmont Street NW. Immediately she started apartment-hunting again because the place was as bad as the Ritz had been in 1969.

Sitting in the office of the building where she is now a manager, Smith said, "I almost gave up on finding a decent place to live when I heard from a friend that new management (the church) was taking over this building."

When she returned she not only found the old building under new management, she found a spirit of to-

See JUBILEE, C-7

"How the Jubilee Community Built a New Environment Here," The Washington Star, 1975



Residents fight their displacement from the Imperial apartment building on Columbia Road



Barbara Moore talks with the children of Jubilee Housing, 1974



Darlene and her Double Dutch partner outside Jubilee Housing, 1979



Drumming and Dancing in Unity Park, 1978

"Christ would have been more at home in the coffee house."



The Potter's House on Columbia Road: It calls itself "a place to share a vision."

By Steve Szabo—The Washington Post

Potter's House Is Still a Home for Everyone

By Phil Casey

The Potter's House, one of the first church-sponsored coffee houses in the country, is alive and well at 1658 Columbia Rd. NW., where it continues to attract a wide range of customers, of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs.

They come there for peace, quiet, thoughtful discussion, music, poetry, literature, food and art. And they get it all, one time or another.

It's a nonprofit enterprise, staffed mainly by nonpaid volunteers who devote hours each week to keeping the place going. There are only a handful of paid employes, and they don't get much pay.

It began in April, 1960, and it has never been in the black. The Church of the Saviour, an ecumenical church at 2025 Massachusetts Ave. NW, subsidizes it.

Most of the volunteers are connected with the church, which has a small membership. The Rev. N. Gordon Cosby, pastor of the church, often helps out by waiting on tables. All creeds and colors are welcome, and the clientele is "a cross section" of the community, say Esther Dorsey and Mary Hitchcock, who run the restaurant.

What they're engaged in is "a mission" to the community, they say, an attempt to bring Christ and the church to the people and to involve church members and the customers in the life and improvement of the community.

The Potter's House menu is unusual. On the back page there is this declaration:

"The Potter's House is a people and a place crying out to the city: 'Awake before it is too late.' Metropolitan Washington is a city that doesn't work. This is true of every major American city. We are intolerant of a city that fails to work on behalf of all of its people. This city can work. It can be totally rebuilt. None of its systems will work unless all of its systems work. We demand that the total task of rebuilding be undertaken NOW. All that defeats us is lack of vision and caring. The Potter's House is to provide a place for the sharing of this vision and the nurturing of this caring."

In an attempt to increase income and enable the Potter's House to operate without financial help from the church, it is open for lunch now as a commercial restaurant. As it is, the restaurant nearly breaks even, but it does it with low salaries and a horde of volunteer work. The Church of the Saviour may have to contribute about $12,000 in the 12-month period ending this Sept. 30.

The menu had other information, in addition to the declaration quoted earlier: "The tips you leave do not go to the waiters and waiteresses who serve you. They go to the rebuilding of the city."

One of the main features in the beautifully and warmly decorated room, with its recessed lights, brown wood walls and carpet, is the constant art exhibit on the walls.

Two beautifully written books have been published about the Church of the Saviour and its missions, in-

See POTTER'S, F7, Col. 1

"The Potter's House is Still a Home for Everyone," The Washington Post, 1971

Scene

One-Man Show on Pollution

By Dorothy McCardle

Edward Johnson sent off an invitation to President Nixon to "Environment," an exhibition of his art work which opened last night at the Potter's House on Columbia Road. There was no reply from the White House.

Johnson invited Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, too. One of Humphrey's aides phoned to say that the senator would not be able to make it, but some of his staff would.

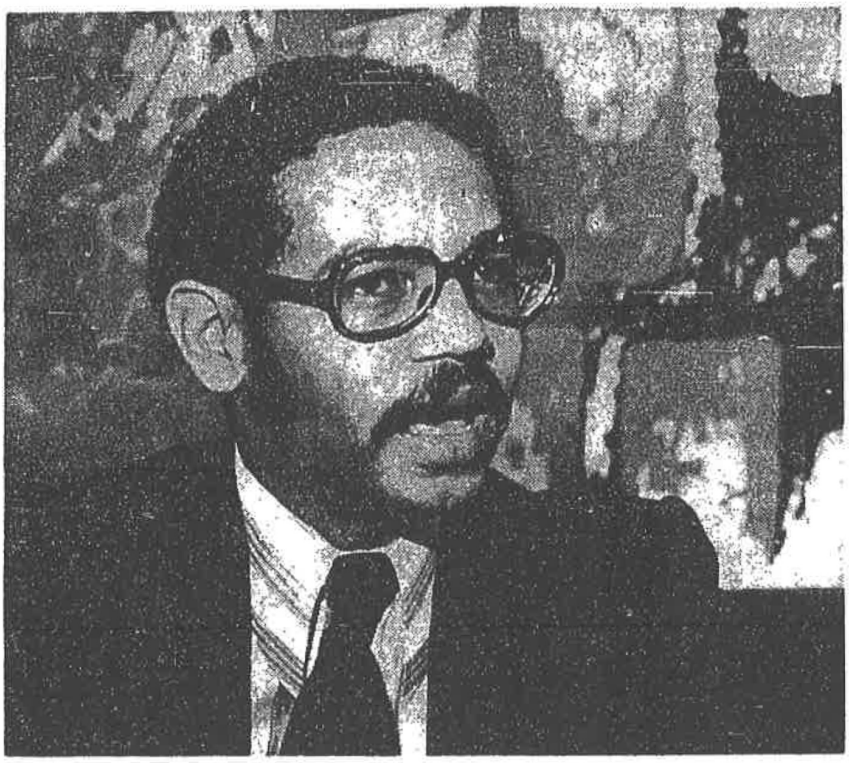
"I invited President Nixon because he is so interested in the environment," said Johnson, an artist and architect who was born and raised in Washington and who is determined to "do something for his country."

The walls of the Potter's House will be hung with Johnson's abstract paintings until March 6. They all depict either problems or solutions. They bear such titles as "Direction in Confusion," "Decay," "Pollution," and "New Communities."

A cross-section of the 500 friends and admirers invited did show up. Most of them have been urging Johnson to have this kind of one-man show for some time.

Eventually, the paintings on the wall will be included in a book Johnson is planning. His own art will illustrate the physical, financial and social problems of one kind of pollution or another. He will write a text to go with the illustrations.

Johnson is so set on bettering the enviroment that he has formed his own firm which he calls OFEGRO (Organization for Environmental Growth). He is an assistant professor of architecture at Washington Technical Institute and an associate professor of urban planning at Federal City College.



By Linda Wheeler—The Washington Post

Edward Johnson at his one-man show at Potter's House last night.

He feels that his birthday is significant for his future role in city planning here. He was born on Jan. 15, 1943. That was Martin Luther King's birthday.

He has bachelor of architecture and master of city planning degrees from Howard University.

His reputation for forward-looking design has spread far beyond Washington. Mayor Charles Evers got him to do a comprehensive city plan for Fayette, Miss. But his chief concern right now is Washington, D.C.

This slight, intense 29-year-old artist turned to his paintings on the wall. One illustrates his idea for a new kind of traffic arrow that "will wake up motorists and help cut down on traffic accidents."

He pointed to another painting that underscores his ideas for "urban ventilation with green parks dotting the congested inner city areas.

He led his guests to an abstract he calls "Affection," which depicts a child tugging at its mother's side.

"In all our concern for city betterment and improved environment, we must always have love and affection," he said.

He wound up enthusiastically:

"Oh, I have so many ideas, and I so long to do something to better my country."

"One-Man Show on Pollution," The Washington Post, 1972



Singing and Clapping at The Potter's House, 1974

THE COMMUNITIES OF THE CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR

The Church of the Saviour functions
in six new church communities

The Dayspring Church

The Dunamis Vocations Church

The Eighth Day Church

The Jubilee Church

The Potter's House Church

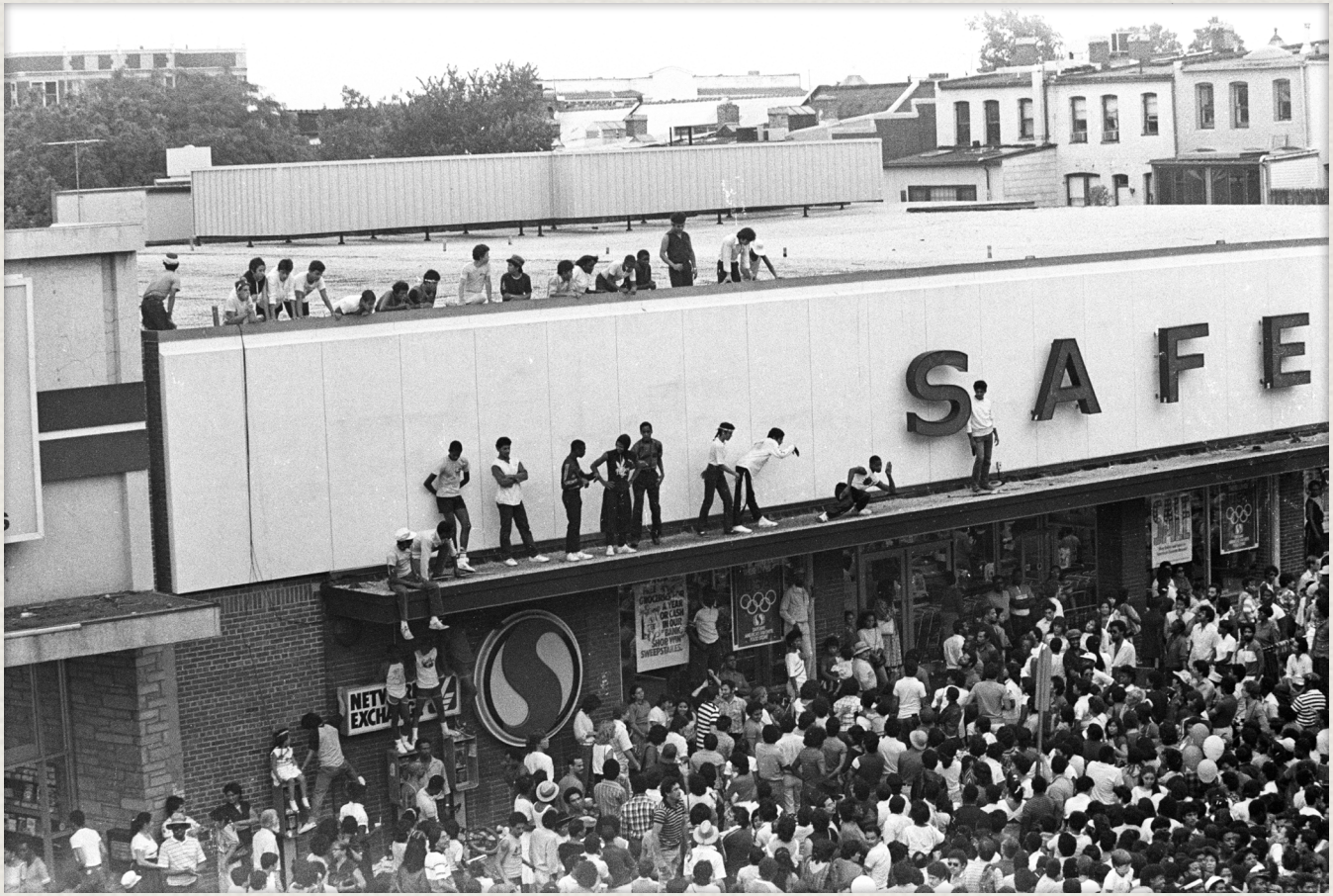
The Seekers Church

OUR CALL

Our Call: The Communities of The Church of the Saviour, 1976



Safeway Boycott in Support of the United Farm Workers, 1973



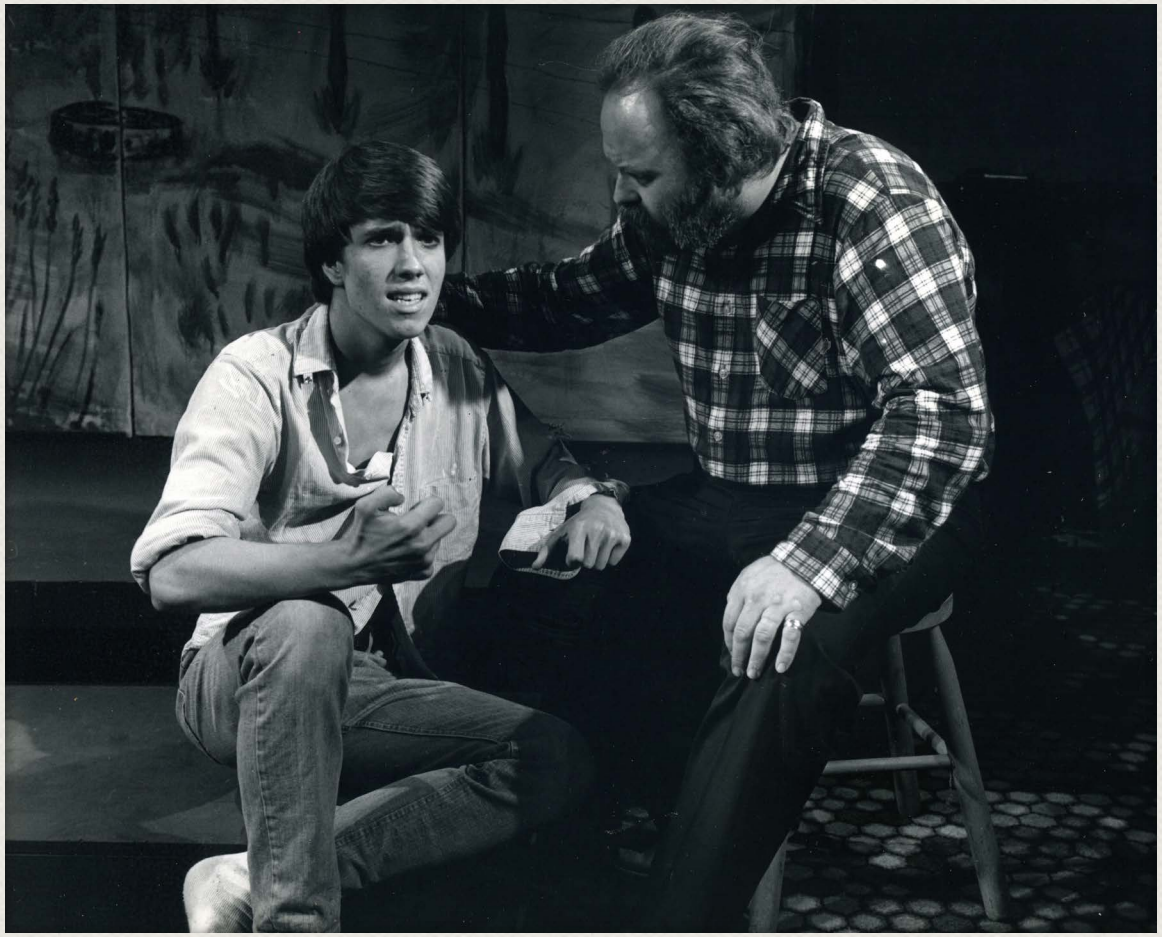
Thousands gather for the Latino Festival, 1975



The Creation of “A People without Murals is a Demuralized People“ in 1977



Bolivian dancer at the Latino Festival, 1979



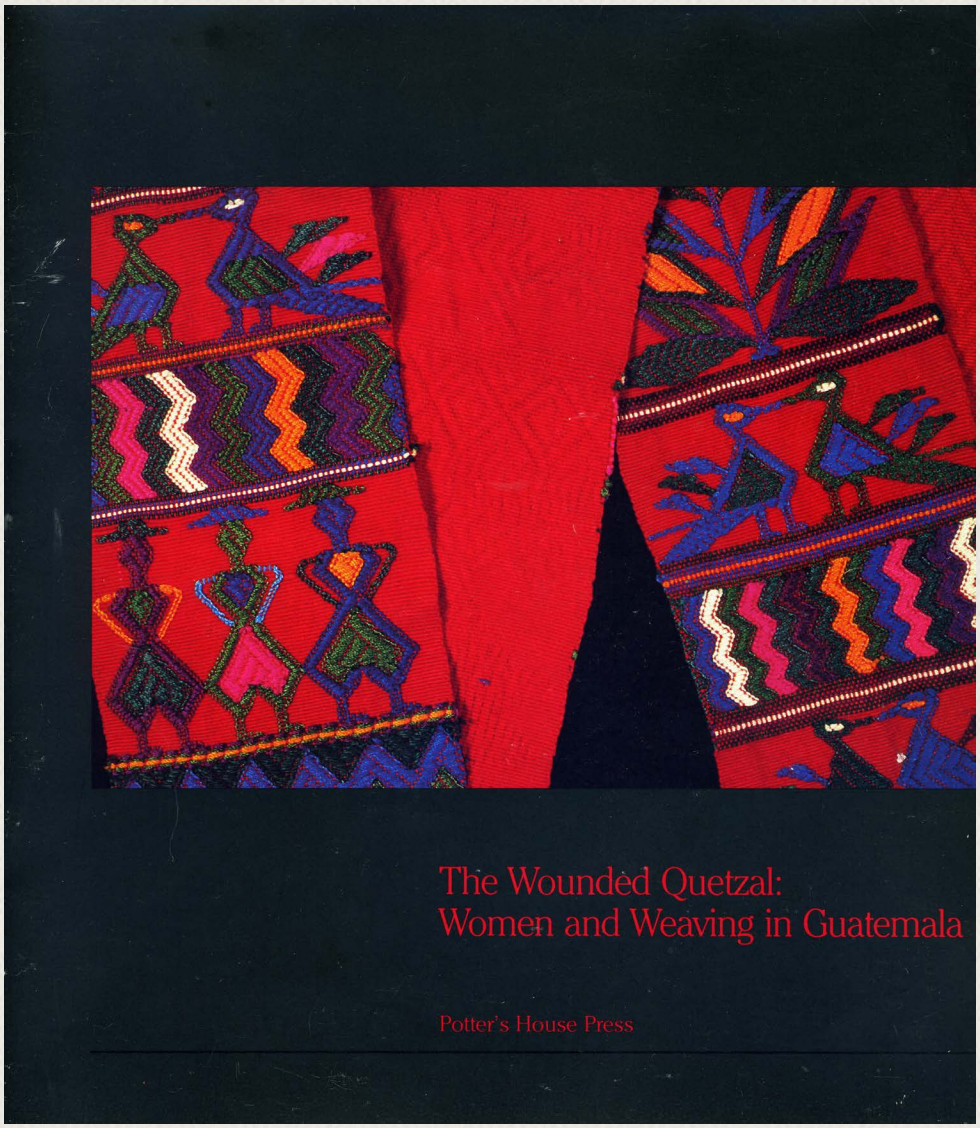
Allen Goetcheus and Gregory Holt perform in *The Prodigal Son*, 1978



Programs from Kerygma, a theater program at The Potter's House, 1981-2



Two women walk home from the market past The Potter's House, 1984



The Wounded Quetzal: Women and Weaving in Guatemala, Potter's House Press, 1987

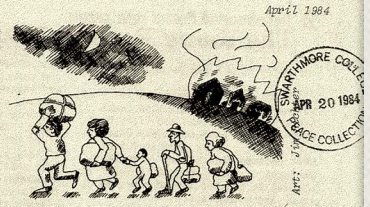


Pledge of Resistance protest in solidarity with the people of Nicaragua, 1986

Washington Peace Center Newsletter

April 1984

Volume 22, Number 3



SWARTHMORE COLLEGE PEACE COLLECTION
APR 20 1984

Refugees flee Central America

DC churches offer sanctuary

by Sharon Kirmeyer

Pedro and Maria Jose of the San Miguel region of El Salvador knew it was time for their family to move on. They had survived the nightmare of 1980, when death squads had pulled peasant organizers and teachers from their village homes in pre-dawn hours. Their oldest son, Victor--then a twenty-year-old farm coop trainee--left to begin a new life in Los Angeles. The remaining family members, like their neighbors, were barely surviving with food from their household garden and small field ("milpa"). There was no need for cash to buy children's school books--the schools had closed two years earlier. There was constant fear: dread of being falsely named on a "subversives list"; terror when US-supplied helicopters whirred close over roof tops; stomach-clutching fear when mortar shells fell near their village. And then Pedro heard that the army would be coming to the village in a week, drafting young men to replace deserters and those killed in combat. The two sons still at home were 15 and 17 years old.

Maria Jose and Pedro were fortunate. Through their work with a Catholic service organization, they knew of a church in Matamoros, Mexico. There they could get help for a trip from the Texas border to a receiving church further north.

The number of sanctuary churches in the US is growing. During Central America Week (March 18-25), both the Eighth Day and the Jubilee faith communities of the Church of the Saviour declared themselves sanctuaries, joining four other DC-area congregations (Lutheran, Mennonite, and Quaker) that did so last year. During the same week, a Weston, Maine church became the hundredth church nationwide to declare itself a refugee sanctuary. And there are hundreds of other churches giving aid to the Central American refugee community.

The refugees

Best estimates show that since 1979, when the population was about five million, at least one million Salvadorans have found it necessary to leave. Initially in the civil war, the majority of the refugees went to nearby countries: Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Mexico. The refugees were a strain on countries with a total population about one third that of the US, but only about one twentieth the economic output of the US (in 1980). Long-standing antipathy toward the Salvadorans--the reputed "industrious people" of the region--was heightened. And while refugees had successfully resettled in Nicaragua, a Nicaraguan stamp on a passport barred return to El Salvador.

Thus many Salvadorans turn to their last option, the US--in spite of linguistic, climatic, cultural, and legal difficulties. The virtual refusal of the US government to issue visas to Salvadorans means that legal entry into the US has been excluded to all but a few. Illegal entry involves traveling from San Salvador to Mexico (usually in vans); getting to the US border by rail or bus; and crossing the border on foot. The total cost of transportation, bribes, fines, border-crossing help ("coyote" services), and bogus papers is usually higher than the $350 cost of a flight from San Salvador to Washington, DC. The trip by air takes four hours, contrasting with the two- to four-week trip "por terreno."

As Pedro, Maria Jose, and their four children prepared to leave, they were

(continued on page six)

"Peace Child" comes to DC schools

by Jane Mattern Vachon

About 12,000 students in the DC public schools saw the musical drama "Peace Child" performed here last month. The Peace Child Players' company, headed by London playwright David Woolcombe, put on the production, with actors including students from local schools as well as members of the company.

DC is the first public school district in the country to put on the play system-wide, though it has been used in several other school districts and in many private schools across the nation. For two weeks in March, the play was performed nearly 20 times in various city schools. Different students took part in each area.

Upbeat message

The performance scintillates with joy and professionalism. The costumes are simple and colorful. The props are minimal. The dancing in this short powerful play combines traditional ballet with modern dance. The music ranges from slow melodious songs to rhythm and blues that practically bring the children up out of their seats and into the aisles. But the serious theme keeps them quiet and attentive--and that's not easy for an hour when you're ten years old.

"Peace Child" is about two children, an American boy and a Soviet girl, who meet and begin to talk about alternatives to nuclear war. Eventually they manange to get the leaders of their two countries to meet and talk. The leaders agree that peace simply is not possible, but in talking they discover that they, too, have things in common, among them fishing.

In getting their leaders to think and talk together, the children use a story told in the play about a tradition of countries offering children at birth to grow up and live in opposing nations. Because each country is concerned about the fate of their own children, war is unthinkable. Each child exchanged is called a "peace child."

As the play progresses, it is funny, sad, happy, but always full of life. What happens to our child heroes after

6

...Sanctuary

(continued from front page)

full of the pain of departure--leaving their remaining relatives and neighbors, their land, and their country. They hoped for physical and economic survival in "El Norte." From the experience of their son Victor, they knew they would live a half-life due to their undocumented status; but that half life held more promise than the violence-filled life in San Miguel.

The state

The legal uncertainty that Pedro and Maria Jose face is caused by an effort to reduce the number of undocumented aliens in the US, and by political considerations which enter into the granting of refugee status by the US.

In spite of recent studies showing the positive economic contribution made by undocumented workers to the US economy, these aliens are not popular with the US citizen/taxpayer. There is the (unfounded) belief that these immigrants take "citizens' jobs." There is also a real problem: many communities have a large number of foreign-born residents and lack the resources to educate non-English-speaking children and adults, provide translators in hospitals and local agencies, and otherwise meet the needs of aliens. So there is considerable political pressure to deter the undocumented migration with stepped-up Border Patrol activities and more effective apprehension/deportation procedures.

For many years, the US government has made decisions on granting refugee status according to the political orientation of the country of origin. A post-World War II pattern has been to grant political asylum status to persons leaving Eastern bloc or socialist countries, and to deny asylum to petitioners from right-wing or "friendly" countries. The 1980 Refugee Act sought to end arbitrary processing of refugee status requests. Because of conditions in their country, Salvadorans qualify as refugees under the tests of the United Nations' High Commissioner of Refugees. But the State Department still shapes the guidelines for granting refugee status, particularly when there are large numbers of asylum seekers from a particular country. And, to date, the State Department sees Salvadorans as "economic" and not "political" refugees. To officially qualify the hundreds of thousands fleeing El Salvador as political refugees would raise significant issues about the US role in that country.

The churches

The activities of sanctuary churches in the US are diverse, depending on both their members' resources and their commitment to the issues involved. Such activities include holding food drives, giving English classes, raising bond money, and sheltering potential deportees. Actually giving a safe haven or place of sanctuary to those refugees pursued by the law is rare--more often the churches create safety for the refugees by helping them get jobs and adapt to our culture.

The reasons for assisting the refugees wary. Some churches see making a public statement as a way to challenge the Administration's policy regarding the Central American refugees and the war behind the refugees' flight. Others are making a humanitarian response to those who are clearly disadvantaged in American society. Still others with close ties to members of the Central American community see their actions as an extension of friendship. These churches' members go to great lengths--economically, emotionally, and legally--giving protection as an act of love.

Of the local sanctuary churches, Luther Place Memorial Church and the Eighth Day and Jubilee faith communities all have long-standing programs to serve the poor and disenfranchised in the DC area. Luther Place Memorial sees "church" and "sanctuary" as synonymous; keeping doors open to Central American refugees is consistent with keeping doors open to the city's homeless. The Church of the Saviour communities see providing sanctuary as being faithful to the Gospel. Their special interest is in deepening the dialogue between the Central American and Anglo communities.

Langley Hill (VA) and Adelphi (MD) Friends Meetings as well as Hyattsville Mennonite Church come from the "peace church" tradition. Their members see giving sanctuary as an extension of the call to address the causes of war and to minister to the victims of war. They see US citizens as having a special responsibility to those victimized by the violence in Central America, violence which is in part due to the role the US government plays in that region's conflicts.

At least twenty other churches in the DC area are helping the local Central American community. Some are deciding whether to publicly offer refugee sanctuary. The sanctuary decision was made by Luther Place in a week; that decision required a year and a half for the Eight Day and Jubilee communities, as their members considered the effect that giving sanctuary would have on their own groups and on the other closely-related Church of the Saviour communities in the area. In all cases, the decisions are shaped by the resources of the congregations and the needs of the refugees themselves.

Church, state, and refugees were all involved in mid-February when the US Border Patrol stopped a van outside of San Benito, Texas. Inside were a Dallas Times Herald reporter, two Catholic church women, two Salvadoran young adults, and an eighteen-month-old infant. The Anglos were charged with "transport of illegal aliens" and "conspiracy to transport"; the Salvadorans were apprehended for lack of legal documentation.

As proceedings in the San Benito case begin, many factors are at work: the reporter's freedom of the press; the church women's freedom to practice their religious beliefs; the merits of the Salvadoran's asylum case; pressures on the Immigration and Naturalization Service to use such arrests to reduce illegal immigration; and "election year politics" that may affect the vigorousness of the prosecution.

Church members nationwide are watching the proceedings carefully--and, in the face of increased risk, continuing their life-saving activity.

Sharon Kirmeyer is with the Washington Metro Sanctuary Committee. They are looking for a volunteer to assist in developing a handbook for serving refugee needs. This project would lend itself well to college credit. If interested call Sharon (547-0025) or Pat Goeldner (882-0813) evenings.

...A River

(continued from page four)

taken from one of his famous debates with Stephen Douglass in 1858 is an accurate bellwether of the time:

". . .while they,(Blacks and Whites) do remain together, there must be the position of the superior and the inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the White race." (Emphasis added.) The political realities engendered by the Civil War, including the hundreds of thousands of Black recruits in the Union Army, forced the authorities to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

Emancipation did not bring freedom for Black Americans any more than "Brown vs. the Board of Education" brought about integrated public schools. Wherever Blacks attempted to assert their rights to self-determination--and this occurred throughout the south--the White authorities reacted with violence. The consequence of this reaction, aided and abetted by the northern White establishment, was the dismal failure of reconstruction, and the establishment of a separate and unequal economic system called sharecropping, where Blacks were forced to work land owned by White landlords and were denied the most basic Constitutional rights. Thus the Freedom Struggle continued for Black Americans against a new system of "legal" slavery based, once again, on their subjugation and exploitation.

Professor Harding is presently at work on a second volume of There Is a River covering the Black American Freedom Struggle from reconstruction to the present. His work serves admirably as an introduction to and overview of a grossly neglected part of the American story.

"DC Churches Offer Sanctuary," Washington Peace Center Newsletter, 1984



The Ontario Theater at the corner of Columbia and 17th, 1984



Staff examine medical records at Columbia Road Health Services, 1981



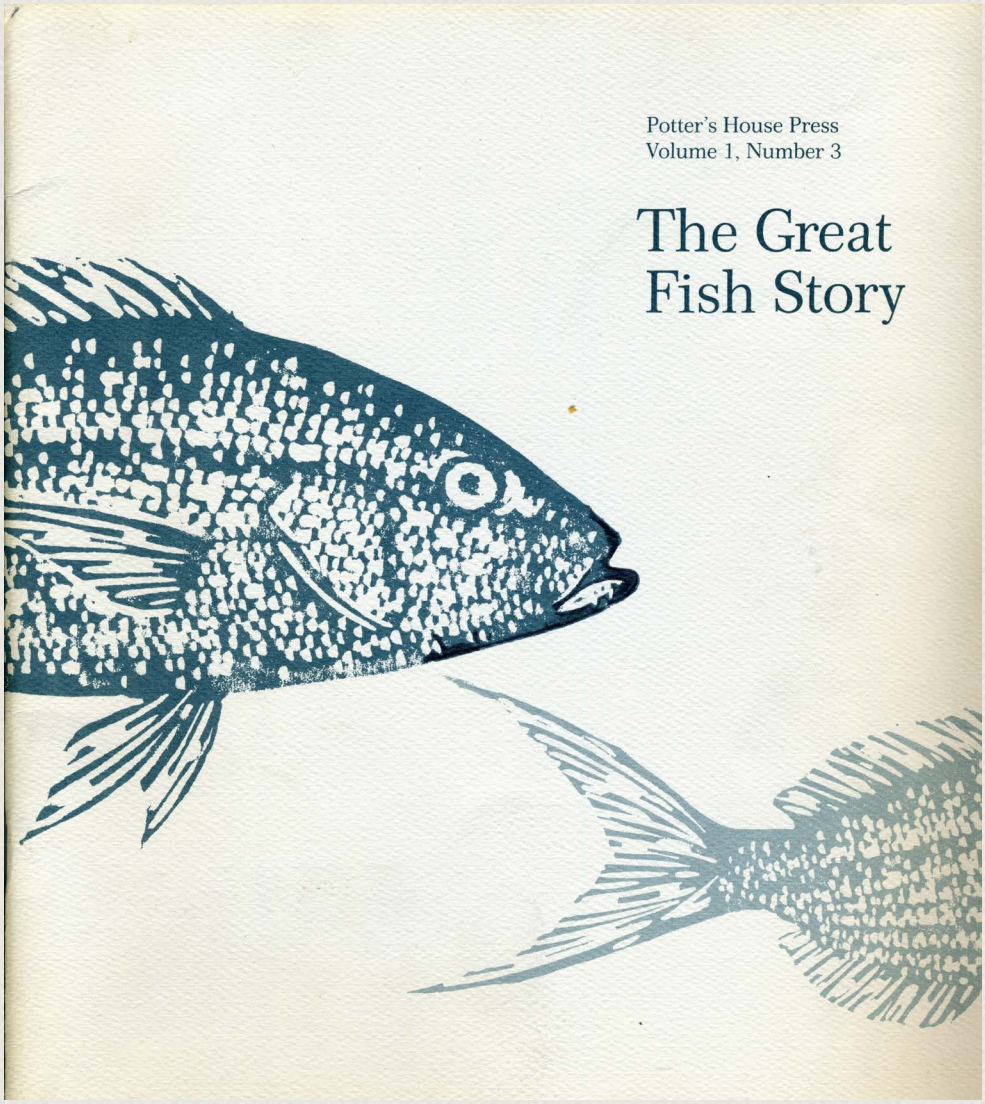
Children eat at The Family Place, 1983



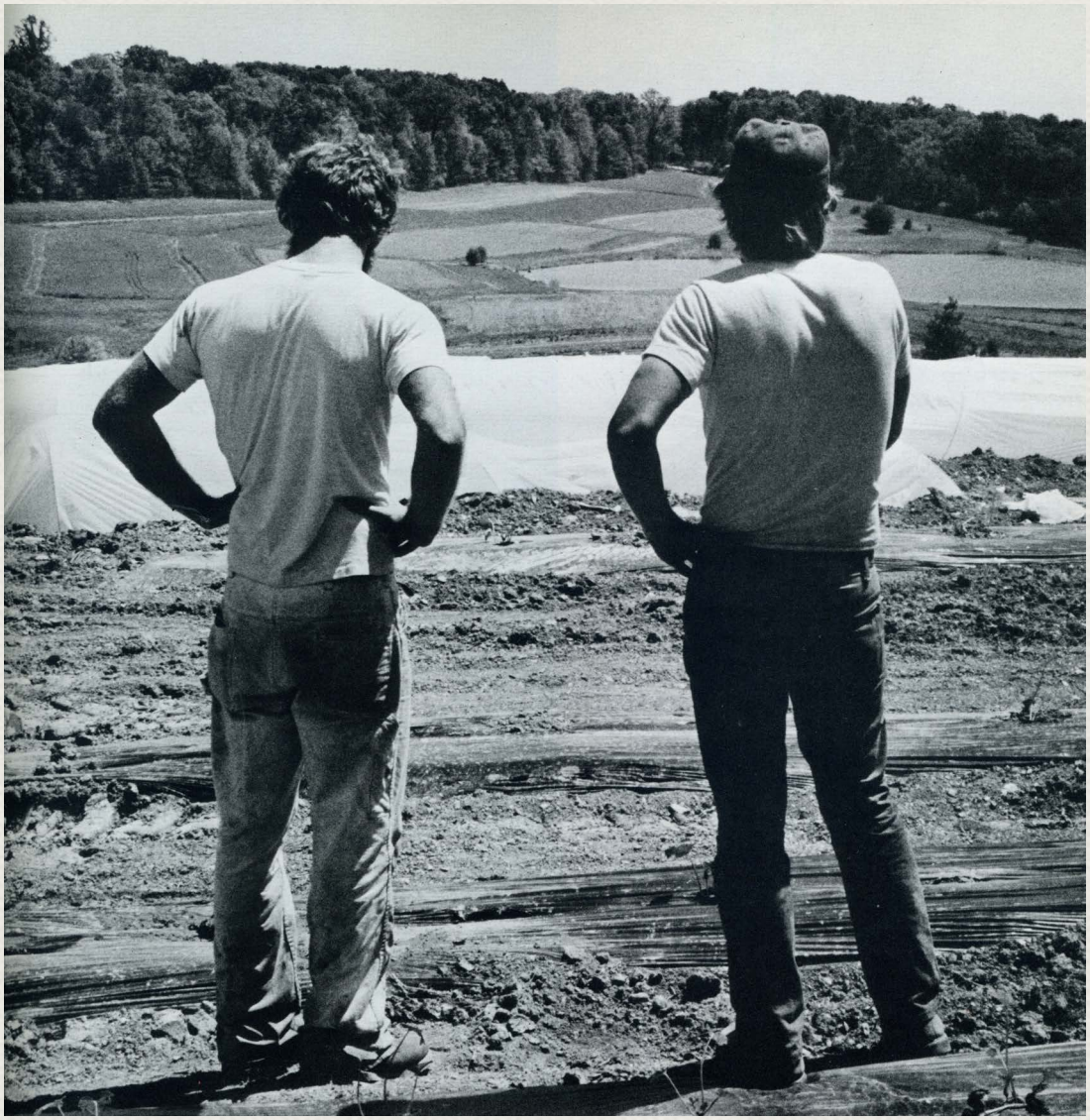
L'Arche Open House, 1984



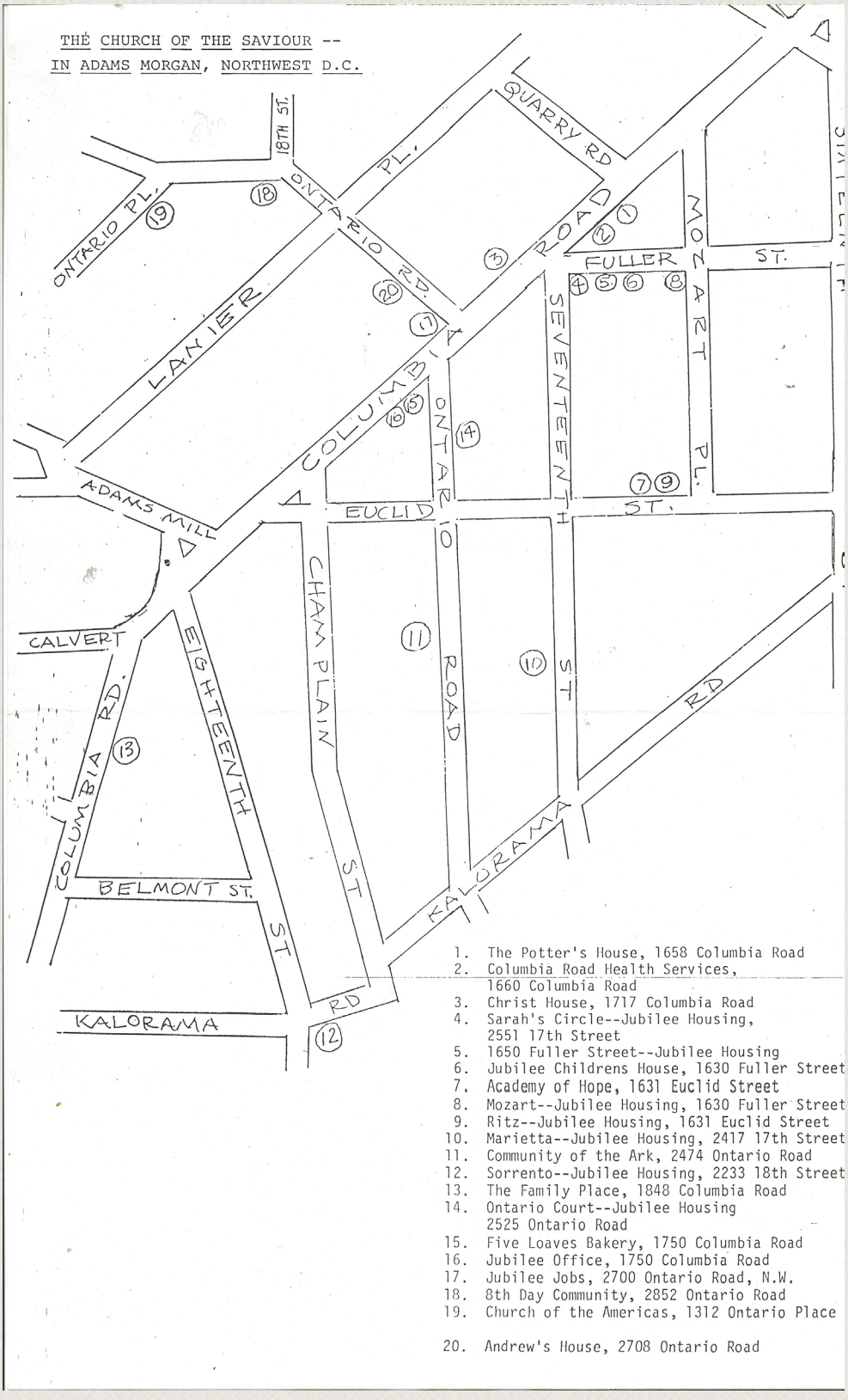
Dancing around steel drums at Adams Morgan Day, 1983



The Great Fish Story, Potter's House Press, 1986



Surveying Dayspring Farm, 1986

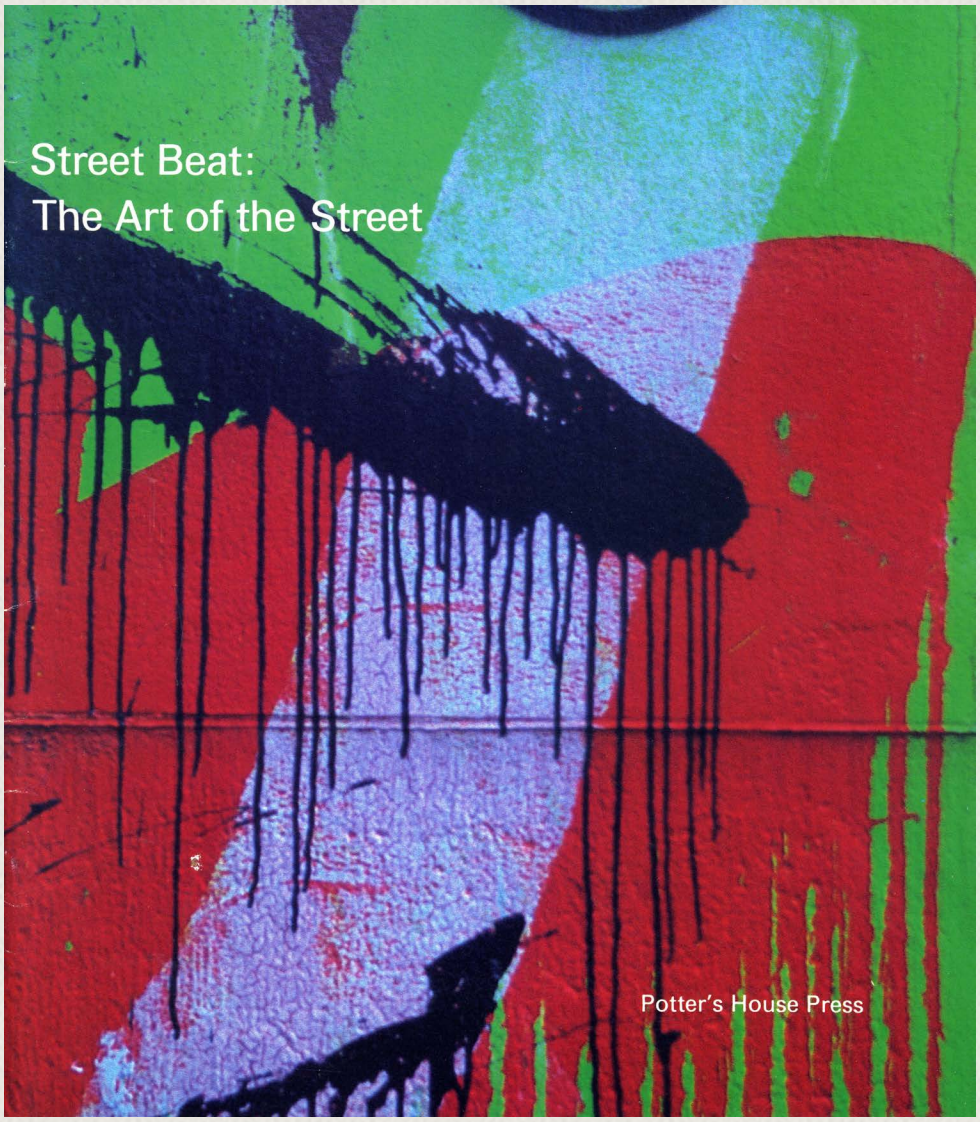


1. The Potter's House, 1658 Columbia Road
2. Columbia Road Health Services, 1660 Columbia Road
3. Christ House, 1717 Columbia Road
4. Sarah's Circle--Jubilee Housing, 2551 17th Street
5. 1650 Fuller Street--Jubilee Housing
6. Jubilee Childrens House, 1630 Fuller Street
7. Academy of Hope, 1631 Euclid Street
8. Mozart--Jubilee Housing, 1630 Fuller Street
9. Ritz--Jubilee Housing, 1631 Euclid Street
10. Marietta--Jubilee Housing, 2417 17th Street
11. Community of the Ark, 2474 Ontario Road
12. Sorrento--Jubilee Housing, 2233 18th Street
13. The Family Place, 1848 Columbia Road
14. Ontario Court--Jubilee Housing 2525 Ontario Road
15. Five Loaves Bakery, 1750 Columbia Road
16. Jubilee Office, 1750 Columbia Road
17. Jubilee Jobs, 2700 Ontario Road, N.W.
18. 8th Day Community, 2852 Ontario Road
19. Church of the Americas, 1312 Ontario Place
20. Andrew's House, 2708 Ontario Road

Map of The Church of the Saviour Ministries, 1987



Friends pose with The Servant Christ outside Christ House, 1991



Street Beat: The Art of the Street, Potter's House Press, 1987



Beulah Rivers races a tricycle outside Sarah's Circle, 1994



Academy of Hope students with tutor Nolan Bosley-Smith, 1989



Street Scene on Columbia Road, 1990



March for Gay and Lesbian Liberation, 1991



Pan-African activists rally against Apartheid in South Africa on Columbia Road, 1990



Mary Easley prepares her soul food favorites for Potter's House guests, 1995

Coffee House a Mission for Peace

Church-Sponsored Eatery Brings Warm Message to Adams-Morgan

By Katie Gardner
Special to The Washington Post

Located between a Latin American restaurant and a health clinic, The Potter's House at 1658 Columbia Rd. NW instantly stands out. The large windows reveal a warmly lit interior with tables and chairs on one side, and dozens of books and gifts on the other.

The Potter's House is one of the nation's first church-sponsored coffee houses, and it has been offering food, music and a peaceful environment for 27 years.

"It is meant to be a place of peace," said Beulah Rivers, assistant manager of the Adams-Morgan coffee house. "In the center of drugs, it is meant to be a stepping-stone for the light of the church to shine."

The Potter's House Church is one of six churches that make up the Church of the Saviour, a non-denominational, ecumenical community. The church was founded in 1947 by a former Baptist minister, Gordon Cosby, and his wife, Mary, in an attempt to help World War II veterans better deal with the realities of life and death, and life after war.

The Potter's House takes its name from a biblical story in which the prophet Jeremiah was directed to go down to the potter's house. There he watched the potter mold the clay into a vessel, and he learned how God molds and reshapes people's lives.

The coffee house was opened in 1960 by the Cosbys in an effort to bring the teachings of the church to the everyday life of people.

"It began as a place where people could come and ask religious questions, amidst good conversation and good music," said Mary Cosby. "It wasn't until the 1960s and the riots following the death of Martin Luther King Jr. that we became aware of the neighborhood. There were a lot of poor people in the neighborhood who starting speaking up for their rights, and it was then that we became aware of the neighborhood."

Each of the six churches under the Church of the Saviour's umbrella has several mission groups that provide services for their communities.

In addition to the coffee house, Potter's House missions include a low-income housing program and services for the homeless in the neighborhood.

"We became aware of the housing shortages, so we began Jubilee Housing, a low-income housing program [on 1750 Columbia Rd. NW]," said Mary Cosby. "We became aware of the health of the people, so we began Christ House, an infirmary for the homeless [across the street from The Potter's House at 1717 Columbia Rd. NW]."

The coffee house attracts a diverse crowd; many of the regular customers are associated with the church or one of its missions. Other regulars are people who live or work in the neighborhood.

With its rich carpet, thick wooden walls and subdued lighting, the coffee house creates an atmosphere of warmth and peace. Staff members have a friendly greeting for everyone. Patrons include local business people, retired people and an occasional homeless person.

Open for lunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, the Potter's House offers home-cooked soup, salads, sandwiches and desserts. A small attached bookshop offers gifts and a wide selection of religious, political, women's studies and self-help titles.

The coffee house is open Thursday and Friday nights, and on Friday nights offers live gospel, classical, pop or folk music. Every other Friday night, L'arche, a local group home for the developmentally disabled, operates The Potter's House.

To select Friday night entertainers, who play for gratis, The Potter's House hosts occasional open mike nights during which musicians play a short set and audience members submit ballots rating their performances. Those receiving the highest number of positive votes are invited to return for a regular show.

Rivers, who came to The Potter's House as a volunteer, said her life is testimony to the coffee house's importance. "I almost killed myself with alcohol," Rivers said. "I was a drunk; this place rescued me and I found peace here."

"Coffeehouse a Mission for Peace," The Washington Post, 1988