

AN OPEN LETTER FROM KOINONIA FARM

During the 14 years we have been in this County, we have made no public declaration of our principles and purposes. This has been largely due to the fact that we wanted no one to think that we were trying to force our ideas on them. We wanted simply to live our own lives under God.

We do not now wish to stir up controversy. But recent events, together with much false rumor, cause us to feel that the people of this county are entitled to the truth. We must speak, trusting that you will understand the spirit in which we speak.

Most of us are Southerners. All of us are trying to be honest followers of Jesus Christ.

He has taught us many things. One is that God is the Father of all those who, in whatever race or nation, believe in Him and walk according to His way (Acts 17:26). He said such believers were brothers (Matt. 23:8). He prayed that they might be one in His fellowship (John 17:21). He taught that God does not receive men according to their outward appearance but according to their hearts (Acts 10:34,35).

In order to be true to Him, we accept as a brother anyone who serves the Father as a son (Acts 10:28).

Jesus taught us to love one another. Love is not selfish, does not hold anything back. We therefore share all our earthly possessions with one another. The early church also did this (Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35). Like that church, we too distribute to each other according as he has need.

Jesus taught us to love our enemies, (Matt. 5:44), to do good to those that hate us. We therefore seek to do good to all men and harm to no one. We will not use force, nor violence, nor retaliation, nor vengeance. We do not kill—in war or peace (Romans 12:18).

We make our living in an humble but honorable way—farming. We grow peanuts, corn, cotton, grain, fruit and vegetables, cattle, hogs, poultry. Like many other farmers, we borrow money from the local bank to make our crops, and our land is mortgaged. Our business transactions with local people, amounting to thousands of dollars each year, have been pleasant, and our credit is good. We take good care of our land, which is now supporting about 60 people.

We are not an agency of any outside group. We have no official connection with any other organization, though we do cooperate with other people and groups who are seeking to accomplish Christian purposes.

Though we are incorporated as a non-profit, religious organization and so classified by the Federal Government, we pay into the treasury of Sumter County a sizeable sum in taxes each year.

Many of us are qualified voters, and participate in elections.

This probably does not answer all of your questions, but we hope it will help you better understand who we are and why we are here. Please do us the favor of not believing a rumor until you have checked the facts. We welcome visitors, and will be glad to answer any questions about our life.

Koinonia Farm

Harry Atkinson, Allene Atkinson, Conrad Browne, Ora Browne, Chris Drescher, Jeanette Drescher, Gilbert Butler, Marguerite Butler, Howard Johnson, Clarence Jordan, Florence Jordan, Norman Long, Will Wittkamper, Margaret Wittkamper, Lola Eustice, John Eustice, Rufus Angry, Sue Angry, J. E. Webster, Gertie Webster, John Gabor, Peter Mathis.