



--FEATURES
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Chaplain Reaches
Out To 'Y' Loners

By Patti Stephenson

PHILADELPHIA (BP)—As chaplain for Philadelphia's Center City YMCA, Fred McGowan once coaxed a mentally-disturbed man into laying down the knife and gun he was flaunting at other residents.

That crisis resolved, McGowan sprinted to a second emergency—feeding another dime into the meter beside his parked car outside. Physical threats and traffic tickets are both hazards of his job.

McGowan's neatly pressed, soft-spoken ministry style appeals to drug users and drifters, as well as the retirees and "respectable," if down-on-their-luck, boarders who call the YMCA's dormitory tower home.

As many as 400 a month claim a small room with the shabby furniture and stale smells of every other room along the Y's dimly-lit halls. McGowan is here "because these people have a need for someone to care for their souls."

Associate pastor of Christian Mission Fellowship, a black Southern Baptist congregation in west Philadelphia, McGowan came to the YMCA first just to preach on Sunday morning. But he kept coming back. Soon, the Delaware Valley Baptist Association supplied him with a \$50-a-month stipend and a gold badge announcing him as "Center City YMCA Chaplain."

McGowan's 20 hours a week are mostly spent "just being here," leading Bible studies, playing checkers with residents, counseling troubled confidantes in the fourth-floor chapel.

"People here like to stay to themselves, they're loners," he's learned. Door-to-door visiting is forbidden him, so McGowan makes contacts by holding afternoon recreation and Saturday night movies—the only social activities offered for residents.

McGowan also leads Sunday Bible study and worship for the regular dozen or so who show up. One of the most faithful is Wanda Jackson, a Y resident since 1974 and McGowan's volunteer secretary.

During a weekday Bible study, McGowan, Jackson and two middle-aged men lean over Bibles spread open on a card table. McGowan explains the meaning of "bondslave" as somebody "sold out to Jesus." The men understand and nod.

A young man interrupts to ask if anyone can "be a buddy and loan me a couple bucks." Eyes shift and no one speaks. Then McGowan smiles, pulls two bills from his wallet, and invites the borrower to join the study. For a few minutes, they discuss the young man's unorthodox views of hell, then he promises to return for more conversation with McGowan during counseling hours. "Thanks a lot, Rev," he says. "I'll be back tomorrow."

One-on-one counseling gives McGowan the greatest chance to make an impact, he thinks. Drug abuse and alcoholism, family rifts and joblessness are common confessions. "I approach every problem straight from the word of God," McGowan tells. "That's all I know so it's all I give."

Close quarters and quick tempers can breed fights and shouting matches, and the chaplain is often called as referee. Leon Beltz, a stocky security guard, thinks tension builds "because folks are cooped up in these little rooms." When McGowan isn't around, "People get hurt," Beltz admits. "He does his best to keep the peace."

To defuse belligerence fueled by boredom, McGowan sets up games and snacks for residents several afternoons a week. Volunteers from his church come as partners for monopoly or chess. Jackson sets out cookies and chips and carefully arranges orange plastic chairs around each table.

One some days, no one comes. Then McGowan, Jackson and church volunteers play a quiet game of Chinese checkers, the humming soft drink machine and empty tables their only companions.

McGowan keeps his equilibrium on those days by remembering "People here think no one in the world cares for them, that's the basic need." Meeting that need is McGowan's mission--and vision. "Evangelism is the core reason I'm here," he confides. "I'd like to see multitudes saved here at the YMCA.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Home Mission Board.

Salesmen Show Sharing
Possible With Incentive

Baptist Press
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OUACHITA, Ark. (BP)--If Southern Baptists possessed the dedication of those powered by profit, they would undoubtedly reach their Bold Mission Thrust goal of presenting the gospel to every person in the world by the year 2000.

Daniel R. Grant, president of Ouachita Baptist University, in his weekly newspaper column in the Arkansas Baptist, related a story told him by a missionary to Africa, Marvin Reynolds.

"I have never been to a place where I couldn't find two things: Coca-Cola, and Singer sewing machines," Reynolds said.

Reynolds recalled a woman walking along a dusty trail in an area very isolated from civilization, balancing a heavy load on her head. He was amazed to discover the load was a portable Singer sewing machine.

"It seems that salesmen, operating with the incentive of the profit motive, have taken their product literally to the uttermost parts of the world," Grant wrote. "Christians, with what should be a far more powerful incentive, should have even less difficulty in taking the gospel to every living person in every part of the world."

"And why not? And now abideth the sharing of Coca-Cola, Singer sewing machines, and the Christian gospel, but the greatest of these is sharing the Christian gospel."

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Hot Tub Too Comfortable
For Polar Minded Baptist

Baptist Press
4/16/82

CRESTED BUTTE (BP)--Rick Papp wanted everyone to know he meant business when he made his profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

When it came time to be baptized, Papp felt the warm water of a hot tub was "too comfortable to symbolize the new commitment he had made." So Papp, Oh Be Joyful Chapel pastor Steve Moorhouse and a throng of spectators went seven miles south of the frozen mountain town to find a stream that was not entirely frozen over.

Papp stripped off his shirt while Moorhouse donned leaky fishing waders. Together they broke through the ice on the edge of the stream and waded in. "Needless to say," Moorhouse noted in his chapel newsletter, "We didn't linger long."

Papp "was beaming from ear to ear the whole time" and said he was so warm inside it didn't bother him a bit, Moorhouse said.

It turns out that Papp has been a member of the Wisconsin Polar Bear Club which each winter cuts holes in the ice for an invigorating swim.

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Mission Leader Gives Shoes
To Barefoot Man on Subway

NEW YORK (BP)--Barefoot and coatless on a chilly spring night, a young man entered the subway car with a group of Southern Baptist missions directors.

Huddled in their overcoats, the directors noticed his feet, scratched and scarred from the pavement, were missing one toe.

In an impulsive act of compassion, Don Mulkey, state missions director for Nevada, sat beside the man, talked a few minutes, then gave his own shoes and socks to him. Another group member shared a gospel tract.

Ray Gilleland, Christian social ministries director for the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, had earlier that night told the mission leaders ministry in Manhattan must share the gospel in practical ways before it can be shared verbally.

"I don't normally do that kind of thing, but it just seemed this was what I had to do," Mulkey said later. Mulkey wore sneakers, the only other shoes he had, through the rest of the conference.

Dan Sanchez, director of missions for the Baptist Convention of New York, called it "the strongest sermon I've seen this year."

During the three-day meeting, the state interfaith witness coordinators visited headquarters of the Jehovah's Witnesses, hearing how they divide the nation into territories of 200 families each with assignments for regular visitation and witnessing.

"Although we sharply disagree with the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses, we cannot fault their efforts to share their faith with the whole world and the systematic way they devise mission strategy," said Glenn Igleheart, Home Mission Board interfaith witness department director.

The conference also featured a discussion on Christian-Marxist dialogues, a meal prepared and served by Buddhist refugees from Cambodia, a discussion of a play, "Mass Appeal," on changes in the Catholic church, and discussions on Jews in America.

A plaque of appreciation was presented to Rabbi Solomon S. Bernards, who is retiring after 21 years of relationships with Southern Baptists on behalf of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'Rith in New York.

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Lottie Moon Lives
As 'Ilex Cortuta'

By Jack Brymer

Baptist Press
4/16/82

SEMMES, Ala. (BP) -- The name Lottie Moon is synonymous with foreign missions in Southern Baptist life.

Lottie Moon, courageous pioneer missionary in mainland China for many years, literally worked herself to death. During the great famine, she worked alongside her beloved Chinese in Tengchow until she grew too weak to continue. On the journey home to recuperate, she died aboard ship in the Kobe, Japan, harbor.

Her memory lives on as Baptists remember her each year in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions. The offering provides more than half of the total annual budget of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

But Lottie Moon also lives in Alabama in the form of an Ilex Cortuta -- Chinese holly.

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Tom Dodd Nurseries Inc., of Semmes -- just west of Mobile -- was faced with a problem a few years ago when it received several Chinese seedlings, two of which could not be identified. International nomenclature prevents giving plants a number for a name, and the use of Latin is restricted, so Dodd had the task of giving names to the new varieties.

Both his parents had been active in Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile. His mother loved missions and missions had always been a part of the family. Love for missions has now been transmitted to the son, so he decided to give the new hollies a name that would "give our denomination some publicity ... create an interest in missions."

The female holly received the name Lottie Moon and the male variety got the name of Matthew Yates, another pioneer missionary to China.

The Yates holly, however, was not popular, so it has been discontinued.

Thomas Henry Dodd Sr. started the nursery about 1920. Four sons are still in the business. One son, John, was a foreign missionary for a short time, but was forced to return to the states because of his wife's illness.

Tom Dodd and his wife, Elizabeth, are members of the Spring Hill Baptist Church of Mobile. The pastor, Drew J. Gunnells, has been president of the Foreign Mission Board.

Mrs. Dodd admits the name of the holly oftentimes allows a chance for witness when someone asks, "Who is Lottie Moon?"

As a reminder of Alabama and pioneer missionary Lottie Moon at the meeting of the FMB in Birmingham April 13, the nursery provided each director with a Lottie Moon Holly, thus perpetuating her memory through living plants.

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(Brymer is managing editor of the Alabama Baptist, journal of the Alabama Baptist Convention.)