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June 27, 1988

N-HMB

88-99

Southern Baptists leading effort
to place chaplains in auto plants

By Mark Wingfield

DETROIT (BP)--United Auto Workers may soon get help piecing together the personal problems they bring to America's automobile assembly plants.

The result should be happier workers and increased productivity, according to supporters of a grassroots movement to place chaplains in every UAW local in the United States.

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board is steering a unified effort for UAW chaplaincy that was conceived independently in locals across the country. Home missionary Lowell Lawson became the union's first approved chaplain during a six-month pilot program in Local 599 in Flint, Mich., two years ago.

In Detroit, Lawson convened nearly 40 union workers who have visions of beginning chaplaincy programs in their plants from Oklahoma City to Kokomo, Ind. The conference was sponsored by the Home Mission Board, although participants' expenses were paid either by their local unions or by themselves.

"If we would build a strong chaplaincy program in our workplace, we would see a better work force, and the company would see a better profit," Clay McFadden of Oklahoma City's Local 1999 said at the conference.

McFadden is typical of those who attended. He is a bivocational minister who works on the assembly line and sees the needs of his colleagues that are going unmet. Workers who are content spiritually are more productive, he said.

Both union and management leaders have acknowledged this point. Lawson's pilot program was "a whale of a success," he said, and led to proposals for chaplaincy being included in the collective bargaining process in 1987.

The resolution on chaplaincy, called "A Family Assistance Program," was part of the bargaining agenda until the final hours of 1987 contract negotiations. If included, it would have provided union support for chaplaincy programs already springing up in individual locals.

Lawson was pleased the resolution made it as far in negotiations as it did, since new programs traditionally must be submitted several times before acceptance, he said. Chaplaincy advocates will try again in 1990.

But meanwhile, the call for chaplains in some locals is growing almost as loud as the riveting cadence of the assembly lines. Because UAW locals are autonomous, like Southern Baptist churches, they may appoint their own chaplains before a national program is approved.

At least three of the UAW's 1,200 locals already have chaplains, although none are in full-time, paid positions, Lawson said. Several other locals have chaplaincy committees preparing to enlist chaplains.

Chaplaincy programs were proposed in the UAW as early as 1968 but failed because they were approached from the management side, Lawson said. The idea surfaced again in 1981 from Dennis Church, a Southern Baptist layman and union worker in the General Motors plant in Flint.

Lawson described Church as a "tenacious bulldog" who would not take no for an answer. Church was determined to get chaplaincy into the union's national bargaining process.

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Because of Church's persistence, Lawson and Huey Perry, director of the Home Mission Board's chaplaincy division, began talking with union leaders in Detroit.

Lawson and Perry discovered strong support for chaplaincy among the rank-and-file and from one key union leader. Tom Weekley, assistant director of the UAW skilled trades department in Detroit, is an Assemblies of God minister concerned about the need for union chaplains.

Lawson said Weekley's support was essential to the progress that has been made. Weekley could not attend the recent conference but sent a letter that was given to each participant.

Weekley wrote: "The chaplains program is a way to take God's love and care into the workplace, where people spend most of their lives. The chaplains program is not another 'religious' program, but a real way to help people with problems that they cannot handle on their own or do not feel comfortable sharing with union and company representatives."

Those attending the conference were urged to take an initial step toward placing a chaplain in their plants. "Start where you can start. If you don't, you won't start at all," said Bill Donovan, director of institutional and business-industrial chaplaincy at the HMB in Atlanta.

"Chaplains work with people where life is happening to them," Donovan said. "As we sit in church, we deal with crisis differently than we do when we're in the midst of it."

People in need are all around, he said: "Perhaps their hands operate the devices upon which you depend for safety. Wouldn't you like to think there is someone close at hand who has the training, experience and above all, the commitment, to help that person through their darkness?"

"Chaplains have demonstrated time after time their ability to hear the silent cry and avert a lifetime of hurt and despair."

Lawson is convinced his pilot program, funded by the Home Mission Board, proved this point. In the six-month period, he recorded 178 ministry opportunities, primarily in on-the-job counseling.

"If people are hurting and somebody cares, it's hard to fail," he said. "Chaplaincy is the church providing an immediate response where the people are."

Southern Baptists currently provide the strongest support for chaplaincy in the UAW but never will have exclusive rights to ministry there, Lawson said.

The Home Mission Board hopes to establish a common ground for chaplaincy ministries in the union, holding up high standards as programs are begun, Perry said. He assured participants at the conference of Southern Baptists' long-term commitment to bringing chaplains to the UAW's 2 million members.

Lawson urged the autoworkers to attend their union meetings and push for chaplaincy. "You've got to get where the decisions are being made," he said.

"Twelve disciples changed the world. We've got four times that number right here."

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Kingerys evangelize Asians
with agriculture, aerobics

By Ken Camp

F - Texas

Baptist Press
6/27/88

DALLAS (BP)--Through agriculture, advocacy and aerobics, Southern Baptist Mission Service Corps volunteers Chip and Jean Kingery are reaching both India's "untouchable" outcasts and its high caste uppercrust with the gospel.

Alongside two Indian couples in Bangalore, the Kingerys, members of Northway Baptist Church in Dallas, direct an international ministry dedicated to sharing Christ through word and deed with the people of southern Asia. The ministry's current focus is the state of Karnataka in southern India.

The Kingerys see their primary task not as development, but as transformation.

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"We try to follow the example of Jesus who met people at the level of their needs," said Kingery. "Development is not the bait at the end of the stick. It is not a tool that is used to evangelize, but rather a process of evangelism from the very beginning. In a natural way, through our relationships, we are able to work Christ into our conversations."

The Kingerys combine social ministries with evangelism through activities such as hands-on agricultural training for Sri Lankan refugees in southern India, daycare and nutritional training at the Adi Karnataka Colony village and a women's exercise class/Bible study in Bangalore.

They also work as liaisons between the poor and local Asian agencies, and they serve as collaborators with other organizations such as the Baptist Hospital in Bangalore, where they are rural development consultants.

"Our approach is very indigenous, very low-key, very Indian. We see ourselves not as providers but as encouragers, teammates and helpmates," said Kingery. "We try to teach self-respect. Part of that process involves unlearning some unhealthy conceptions about Christians."

"The people have been exploited too many times. Too often groups -- even well-meaning ones -- have come in, preached and left. Or else they have come in, fixed a roof, taken pictures and left."

Because the Kingerys are able to obtain visas for only six months at a time, they must divide their attention between their three-room flat in Bangalore and their home office in Cedar Hill, Texas.

However, during their six-month stays in India, they have established a rapport with the Indian people by living on a simple level among them. Both of their children -- Keturah, age two, and Noah, eight months -- were born in India.

"We work side-by-side with the people. We live in a neighborhood with Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus," said Mrs. Kingery. "Our two-year-old daughter speaks words from four Indian languages."

Because they have gained acceptance in their community, the Kingerys are able to share Christ in a natural setting, even among the outcasts of Indian society -- lepers and their families. Three days each week, the Kingerys and their Asian associates work in the Adi Karnataka Colony, visiting in the homes of the outcasts.

"One person at the A.K. colony said, 'The Hindus tell me if my shadow falls on them, they are cursed. But you hold our children, you come to us, you drink tea with us,'" Kingery recalled.

Kingery first felt a calling into Asian missions when, as a student at the University of Richmond (Va.) he was a Baptist Student Union summer missionary to Bangladesh. He later worked for UNICEF, as an intern with the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and as Asian director for World Hunger Relief Inc., in Waco, Texas.

Mrs. Kingery entered missions after being chairperson of the fashion marketing department at Northwood Institute in Cedar Hill. Drawing upon that experience, she worked with Pratima Aruldoss, director of the Christian Student Center in Bangalore, to develop a six-week study course: "Fit for Him: A Look at Inner and Outer Beauty."

Three times a week, Mrs. Kingery directs aerobics classes in which she leads women from Bangalore -- including a number of high-caste Brahmans -- in exercises and discussion of assignments from the "Fit for Him" workbook. Woven throughout the diet suggestions and fashion tips in the workbook are Scripture verses, biblical principles and Bible study assignments.

"I started the first class in November," Mrs. Kingery said. "So far, more than 50 women have taken the course. It has been a great outreach to internationals from Germany, Australia and New Zealand, as well as to the Indian women."

She estimated that 70 percent of the women in the exercise/Bible class are Hindu. Although most of the participants are from the middle and upper classes of Bangalore, "Fit for Him" has cut across lines of class and caste.

"Women who didn't mix on the street would come together and mix in the class," she said.

Although presenting the gospel in a predominantly Hindu culture is slow and difficult, the Kingerys are beginning to see progress. One of their Asian associates, Pushpa Kumar, was visiting the Adi Karnataka outcast colony when a 23-year-old man asked her what Easter meant.

"After Pushpa shared the Easter story," Kingery recalled, "the man said, 'I want to build a chapel in this village to the living God you have told me about.'"

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Adoption of special-needs child
gives insights to Home Life editor

By Terri Lackey

F-SSB

Baptist Press
6/27/88

NASHVILLE (BP)--The piercing wail of a newborn baby delivered with fingers and toes intact evokes a sigh of relief from proud parents.

But what about the babies who are not healthy?

While the vast majority of parents likely would choose a healthy child, Charlie and Sandy Warren are exceptions. The Warrens, who are members of Brentwood (Tenn.) Baptist Church, made the decision more than half a decade ago to adopt a special-needs child, Jan, now 4, and both said they have grown from the experience.

Warren, who in 1987 became editor of Home Life magazine in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department, said he believes the decision to adopt a special needs child will help him deal more sensitively with Home Life readers in similar situations.

"I think my experience with Jan will help a lot here at Home Life in dealing with families who have adopted children with or without special needs," Warren said. "We deal with issues like that in Home Life, and our family situation gives me a unique perspective on adoption."

The decision to adopt a child who would need a lot of care originated with his wife, he said.

"Sandy grew up in a neighborhood near a family who kept foster children. She saw kids coming through the house abused and neglected," he said. "Sandy always said she would like us to adopt a child no one else loved."

And so they did -- finally -- but nothing about the process was easy.

She first brought up the subject of adopting a special-needs child soon after they were married, but he said he was afraid he wouldn't be able to cope emotionally, physically and especially financially.

"Sandy knew I would have to be 100 percent for it," he recalled.

But two sons, Todd, now 14, and Brad, now 12, and many years later, Warren were encouraged when friends adopted a child whom they soon learned had cerebral palsy.

"There was no question in their minds they would keep her, and I began to see how much they had to offer her," Warren said. "That made me look at the issue from the perspective of the child and what we had to offer as a family. One evening I told Sandy if we were going to adopt, we had better go ahead and do it."

They consulted their sons before making a decision. "They were 100 percent for it," he said.

The Warrens thought the next step would be going to a Department of Human Services-run facility, picking out a special-needs child and taking her home.

They were mistaken.

They filled out a mountain of paperwork, including specific information about the type of child they would like to adopt.

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"Basically we wanted a child who was intelligent, not in the sense of guaranteed I.Q., but teachable," Warren said. "We wanted one who was mobile, not bedridden or confined to a wheelchair. And we wanted a girl younger than Brad. He was about six at the time."

After one year of waiting, then a second year and part of a third year, Warren said, they decided to try another agency which specialized in the adoption of international children.

"Just as we were about to transfer our files, DHS called us and said they had a newborn baby in a Memphis (Tenn.) hospital."

The call came on Friday of a Memorial Day weekend. The Warrens were told the baby had hydrocephalus, a dangerous enlargement of the skull due to fluid on the brain which could cause severe mental retardation. The young two-pound premature baby was on a heart monitor, was a candidate for sudden infant death syndrome and would probably be deaf and blind, according to DHS personnel.

Because the information came on a holiday weekend, the Warrens had to wait four "gruesome days" before talking to doctors at the hospital.

"I remember thinking, 'OK Lord, I know this baby is mine.' I knew she was the right one, but all these things were wrong with her," Mrs. Warren said.

When the Warrens finally were able to talk to doctors, they found out the baby did not have hydrocephalus, but a condition of the birth defect that did not affect intelligence and would not leave her with a swollen skull.

The Warrens later determined Jan is not totally blind or deaf, but is blind for the most part in the right eye, and has retina damage to the left. She has moderate to severe hearing loss, which is improved with hearing aids.

The joys of taking care of a special-needs child have far outweighed the trials, the Warrens agreed.

"It takes a lot of time on my part, and her personality is very demanding," Mrs. Warren said. "The boys and Charlie all do their parts in taking care of her."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Baptist ministry educates
missionary, neighborhood

By Mark Wingfield

F-HMB

Baptist Press
6/27/88

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Billy, Brian and Mickey have taught Greg Carey things about ministry he couldn't have learned at any of the three seminaries whose offers he declined.

In return, Carey has taught the three boys about Jesus, someone they might otherwise never have known.

Carey, a US-2 missionary from Muscle Shoals, Ala., turned down offers to study at Yale University, Vanderbilt University or Southern Baptist Theological Seminary last fall. Instead he chose to work with underprivileged youth in inner-city Richmond, Va., for two years first.

Earning his way into the informal classroom of the closed community was more difficult than being accepted to the formal classrooms of any seminary, he said.

As a result, six boys have professed faith in Christ, and Carey has a new perspective on ministry.

US-2 missionaries are appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board for two-year terms throughout the United States. US-2ers must be college graduates not older than 27. They receive housing and food allowances and small monthly stipends.

Carey works with home missionaries Willie and Evelyn Berry at Oregon Hill Baptist Center. His primary ministry is done through the "Youth Den," a large Sunday school room converted into recreation and gathering area for neighborhood youth.

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Oregon Hill is an inner-city community of 100-year-old row houses bounded by the Virginia State Penitentiary, Virginia Commonwealth University and Hollywood Cemetery, where U.S. presidents Monroe and Tyler are buried.

The 2,000 people living in the two-story, un-airconditioned houses are all white, mostly poor and highly unchurched.

Because sports are important to the teen-age boys, Carey works with several neighborhood teams. His basketball team went to the state playoffs this year. Most of the kids had never been on a road trip or stayed in a motel, he said.

In the current season, Carey acts as assistant coach of the neighborhood baseball team in the Richmond Metro League. Through baseball and other sports, Carey teaches the kids how to get along.

When they get in fights, Carey helps the youths restore their broken relationships. "That's what ministry is all about -- teaching kids about reconciliation," he said.

From that point Carey builds relationships that allow him to present the gospel, the story of reconciliation with Christ.

Teaching the Oregon Hill youth about Jesus is more difficult than teaching them about sports, Carey said. The kids watch every sport they can on television but are "spiritually illiterate."

"So much of the work is just letting them know who God is," he said. "A lot of the kids don't even know there was a resurrection."

The bottom line for most of his kids is what Jesus can do for them now, because they live with poor self-esteem and insecurity, Carey said. But he refuses to prey upon their misunderstandings just to add numbers to his reports.

"I could invite these kids to get baptized to be saved from hell and they all would," he said. Instead, he asks them, "Are you willing to give your whole life to Jesus?"

In his first nine months, Carey has led at least six youth to give their lives to Jesus. He follows up each decision with personal discipleship training.

Carey began to break through the group with the conversion of Mickey in December, he said. While teaching that boy more about Christ, three others began to ask why Carey was spending so much time with him.

The three requested that Carey leave them alone with the boy in the Youth Den. When they finally let Carey back in the room more than 30 minutes later, the three had decided they wanted to be Christians, too.

Carey said he still doesn't know what went on behind the closed door; the four will not talk about it. But he does know he's beginning to see changes in the lives of his neighborhood kids.

As the boys are changing, so is Carey.

"I'm learning to empathize with people who aren't like me," he said. "I'm learning how to meet the needs they really have rather than the needs I think they have."

Through working with the Berrys, Carey has gained first-hand experience in ministry that he would have had to learn by hard knocks on his own, he said, noting, "I might have already blown my ministry if it hadn't been for the Berrys."

"The rewards outweigh the hardships," he said. "I've had more fun before, but I've never been happier."



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Southern Baptist Network
LAWSON AND MCFADDEN'S
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

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"Sandy knew I would have to be 100 percent for it," he recalled.

But two sons, Todd, now 14, and Brad, now 12, and many years later, Warren were encouraged when friends adopted a child whom they soon learned had cerebral palsy.

"There was no question in their minds they would keep her, and I began to see how much they had to offer her," Warren said. "That made me look at the issue from the perspective of the child and what we had to offer as a family. One evening I told Sandy if we were going to adopt, we had better go ahead and do it."

They consulted their sons before making a decision. "They were 100 percent for it," he said.

The Warrens thought the next step would be going to a Department of Human Services-run facility, picking out a special-needs child and taking her home.

They were mistaken.

They filled out a mountain of paperwork, including specific information about the type of child they would like to adopt.

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"Basically we wanted a child who was intelligent, not in the sense of guaranteed I.Q., but teachable," Warren said. "We wanted one who was mobile, not bedridden or confined to a wheelchair. And we wanted a girl younger than Brad. He was about six at the time."

After one year of waiting, then a second year and part of a third year, Warren said, they decided to try another agency which specialized in the adoption of international children.

"Just as we were about to transfer our files, DHS called us and said they had a newborn baby in a Memphis (Tenn.) hospital."

The call came on Friday of a Memorial Day weekend. The Warrens were told the baby had hydrocephalus, a dangerous enlargement of the skull due to fluid on the brain which could cause severe mental retardation. The young two-pound premature baby was on a heart monitor, was a candidate for sudden infant death syndrome and would probably be deaf and blind, according to DHS personnel.

Because the information came on a holiday weekend, the Warrens had to wait four "gruesome days" before talking to doctors at the hospital.

"I remember thinking, 'OK Lord, I know this baby is mine.' I knew she was the right one, but all these things were wrong with her," Mrs. Warren said.

When the Warrens finally were able to talk to doctors, they found out the baby did not have hydrocephalus, but a condition of the birth defect that did not affect intelligence and would not leave her with a swollen skull.

The Warrens later determined Jan is not totally blind or deaf, but is blind for the most part in the right eye, and has retina damage to the left. She has moderate to severe hearing loss, which is improved with hearing aids.

The joys of taking care of a special-needs child have far outweighed the trials, the Warrens agreed.

"It takes a lot of time on my part, and her personality is very demanding," Mrs. Warren said. "The boys and Charlie all do their parts in taking care of her."

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Baptist ministry educates
missionary, neighborhood

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press
6/27/88

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Billy, Brian and Mickey have taught Greg Carey things about ministry he couldn't have learned at any of the three seminaries whose offers he declined.

In return, Carey has taught the three boys about Jesus, someone they might otherwise never have known.

Carey, a US-2 missionary from Muscle Shoals, Ala., turned down offers to study at Yale University, Vanderbilt University or Southern Baptist Theological Seminary last fall. Instead he chose to work with underprivileged youth in inner-city Richmond, Va., for two years first.

Earning his way into the informal classroom of the closed community was more difficult than being accepted to the formal classrooms of any seminary, he said.

As a result, six boys have professed faith in Christ, and Carey has a new perspective on ministry.

US-2 missionaries are appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board for two-year terms throughout the United States. US-2ers must be college graduates not older than 27. They receive housing and food allowances and small monthly stipends.

Carey works with home missionaries Willie and Evelyn Berry at Oregon Hill Baptist Center. His primary ministry is done through the "Youth Den," a large Sunday school room converted into recreation and gathering area for neighborhood youth.

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Oregon Hill is an inner-city community of 100-year-old row houses bounded by the Virginia State Penitentiary, Virginia Commonwealth University and Hollywood Cemetery, where U.S. presidents Monroe and Tyler are buried.

The 2,000 people living in the two-story, un-airconditioned houses are all white, mostly poor and highly unchurched.

Because sports are important to the teen-age boys, Carey works with several neighborhood teams. His basketball team went to the state playoffs this year. Most of the kids had never been on a road trip or stayed in a motel, he said.

In the current season, Carey acts as assistant coach of the neighborhood baseball team in the Richmond Metro League. Through baseball and other sports, Carey teaches the kids how to get along.

When they get in fights, Carey helps the youths restore their broken relationships. "That's what ministry is all about -- teaching kids about reconciliation," he said.

From that point Carey builds relationships that allow him to present the gospel, the story of reconciliation with Christ.

Teaching the Oregon Hill youth about Jesus is more difficult than teaching them about sports, Carey said. The kids watch every sport they can on television but are "spiritually illiterate."

"So much of the work is just letting them know who God is," he said. "A lot of the kids don't even know there was a resurrection."

The bottom line for most of his kids is what Jesus can do for them now, because they live with poor self-esteem and insecurity, Carey said. But he refuses to prey upon their misunderstandings just to add numbers to his reports.

"I could invite these kids to get baptized to be saved from hell and they all would," he said. Instead, he asks them, "Are you willing to give your whole life to Jesus?"

In his first nine months, Carey has led at least six youth to give their lives to Jesus. He follows up each decision with personal discipleship training.

Carey began to break through the group with the conversion of Mickey in December, he said. While teaching that boy more about Christ, three others began to ask why Carey was spending so much time with him.

The three requested that Carey leave them alone with the boy in the Youth Den. When they finally let Carey back in the room more than 30 minutes later, the three had decided they wanted to be Christians, too.

Carey said he still doesn't know what went on behind the closed door; the four will not talk about it. But he does know he's beginning to see changes in the lives of his neighborhood kids.

As the boys are changing, so is Carey.

"I'm learning to empathize with people who aren't like me," he said. "I'm learning how to meet the needs they really have rather than the needs I think they have."

Through working with the Berrys, Carey has gained first-hand experience in ministry that he would have had to learn by hard knocks on his own, he said, noting, "I might have already blown my ministry if it hadn't been for the Berrys."

"The rewards outweigh the hardships," he said. "I've had more fun before, but I've never been happier."

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