

Caring about others: It can be simple, it can be hard



REV. KATE THORESEN

MORAL PERSPECTIVES
Once again people in the inner city of Detroit provided some real life, practical examples of moral behavior that acts for the well being of others.

A group of us visited a church in southwest Detroit that ran a food distribution center, tutoring program and senior citizens activities.

We met some fantastic people there, including Linda Spicer, the organizer for the food distribution center. She orders quantities of

food through places like Gleaners as well as handles contributions from various groups. She keeps records on all the recipients to make sure that each qualifies for the food.

Her husband often drives to pick up the large quantities to make sure there is enough on each Monday and Thursday at distribution time. Many others help.

It takes a team effort to carry something like this off. And it also takes a dedicated person to organize it and to enable it to run smoothly. Linda has been doing this for nine years as a volunteer. It's like a full-time job. We asked her why she kept doing this for

such a long time with no pay and no benefits. She smiled and said simply, "because I care."

Bingo! "Because I care." Linda hit upon a great motivating force in the world that we granted underrate or even take for granted — care about others. It can be the basis for many of our moral choices. Do we really care about what happens to another person? Or are our decisions based mainly on preserving our own well being, our own level of comfort or on trying to keep climbing up that elusive ladder of success?

What does this kind of care look like? According to Webster's, care is defined as "some degree of pain in the mind from apprehension of evil; a painful load of thought; concern; attention or heed; a looking to; caution; regard; watchfulness; charge or oversight, implying concern for safety and prosperity; the object of care or watchful regard and attention."

Care in this sense is not giving demeaning handout. Rather, it comes as a free and loving gift. It takes some imagination to exercise care. People like Linda can imagine what might happen to the poor, the homeless, the unemployed, the limited income senior citizen, the single parent with several children if they do not have adequate food.

They are people to her — not just nameless stories or invisible statistics. And in her own way, she is making a difference in the lives of some human beings around her.

Not all of us can devote full-time to volunteer work. But there is something significant that each one of us can do to foster the moral base of our community. We can take the first step by simply actively seeing and caring about others as human beings whether they are across town, across the ocean or across the table from us.

And with that attitude, the next step is to actively ask what are the needs, what are the resources, what small part might I be able to play in helping to channel some of those resources to help meet some of those needs.

The results of such questions could be astounding in the difference they can make.

It's that simple.

It's that hard.

Rev. Kate Thoresen is director of Partnership Ministries at the First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham. If you have a question of comment for her, call 953-2047, mailbox number 1882, on a touch-tone phone.

Insurance bill awaits vote


State legislators took a two-week Easter break without tying up a long loose end on the auto insurance reform law they enacted.

The bill is on the Senate calendar for an immediate effect vote May 4.

The Senate passed the bill but

failed to muster the two-thirds majority (28) to give it immediate effect. Without that vote, House Bill 4156 doesn't become law until three months into 1994.

"Motorists are losing \$1.7 million a day," said Doug Cruce, president of the Michigan Insurance Federation.



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