



MARK M. HANCOCK/Staff Photographer

The Rev. Lloyd B. Facen takes a minute to get to know 4-year-old Mattie Dodd at the South Dallas church. "Small churches can survive too if we meet the real needs of people," he says.

## S. Dallas pastor takes message, help beyond his church's walls

Reaching out will help small congregation survive, he says

By REGINA L. BURNS  
Staff Writer

The Rev. Lloyd B. Facen has a practical approach to ministry: Help people understand God's word in "real ways."

In his 13 years as pastor of Warren Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Dallas, Mr. Facen has done all the traditional things that come with his job — lead weddings and funerals, teach Bible study classes, counsel the troubled and deliver sermons.

But he's taken his duties a step beyond that by getting involved in the church's neighborhood. Mr. Facen, 65, also encourages his church's outreach to the homeless, which includes feeding and clothing them. These strategies, he said, will help his "small church survive in a megachurch environment."

"We recognize that larger churches can do more because of their resources, but small churches can survive too if we meet the real needs of people," said Mr. Facen, a member of the South Dallas/Fair Park United Churches organization, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the North Texas Area of Christian Churches.

He came to full-time ministry after working for the federal government and other organizations.

### AROUND THE COMMUNITY

almost as if I didn't have a choice."

The turning point came about 20 years ago, when Mr. Facen felt like he was in a box.

"I turned so many ways, and no matter which way I went, I had to say yes.

"It was surprising to be me when I said yes," he explained. He left corporate America for seminary at Texas Christian University.

### Barrel ministry

He believes being a good witness is more than telling what he's seen but is also living what he's learned. Thus, his church has what he calls a barrel ministry.

"You see people standing around barrels in South Dallas. These men come from different parts of life," he said. The church feeds them, and in return, Mr. Facen said, they take care of the church. He said Eddie Walker, who used to be homeless, leads the ministry.

For the last 18 months, Quita Brown, a Warren Avenue member, has been working with the homeless ministry. She said the church usually helps 50 or 60 people on Wednesday nights. Ms. Brown, an organizer with the Pondrum Street Neighborhood Association, said Mr. Facen drove through the neighborhood several years ago and offered his building to the or-

dren. Warren Avenue's first lady said she contributes to the ministry by teaching a Sunday class, serving as music director and "filling in the blanks as needed." Her mission is to "increase the fine arts awareness of our young children," she said.

"The public school system is de-emphasizing fine arts, and when children aren't exposed [to fine arts] they miss a lot of information on what it takes to succeed in music, dance and theater," said Mrs. Facen, who is the manager of ticket processing and collections for Dallas.

This summer she will teach a music class at the church for children 6 to 12.

### Time for games

And speaking of children, no matter how busy he is, Mr. Facen "makes time to slap some bones." That is, to play seriously competitive dominos with his youngest daughter, Taylor Facen.

"I leave the room because no one's talking," Mrs. Facen said.

Said Mr. Facen: "Taylor takes pride that on occasion she beats me. I say 'I'm not going to let this 9-year-old do this to me,' but she does it. She challenges her grandmother. She's good at it."

Just as his father was a preacher, Mr. Facen's ministry has been passed to one of his children. The Rev. Lucretia Cooksy is the pastor of Jubilee United Methodist Church in Duncanville.

Describing herself as a "daddy's

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