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Biography of Pastor Jack Schaap

Updated October 5, 2011

Because of nearly fatal injuries suffered in a car accident at the age of 15, Marlene Elgersma was told she would never be able to have children—but God had other plans. First, a baby girl named Kristi was born to Marlene and her husband, Ken Schaap. Five years later, the doctor—feeling that having another child was too dangerous for both the baby and his mother—scolded Marlene for becoming pregnant again. Despite complications, Jack Allan Schaap arrived safely at the Holland Community Hospital in Holland, Michigan, on October 1, 1957.

Jack Schaap was brought to church just a few weeks after his birth and attended the Rose Park Baptist Church of Holland, Michigan, for most of his early life. At the age of five, he was led to the Lord by his ten-year-old sister, Kristi, as he sat on the edge of the bathtub.

Reared in a very secure home, Jack learned strong family values from his deacon father and church organist mother. He was a very shy child who cried every day in the first and second grades, preferring to be with family members or a few close friends rather than with crowds.

When Jack was 11 years old, his dad started a business. Ken Schaap had worked midnight shifts cleaning a grocery store, as well as working day shifts doing construction, in order to save for this business venture. Ken bought property, cleared the land, and built from scratch a 200-lot mobile home park. Ken hired his son Jack to be his chief partner in this new venture. Jack worked for his dad through his junior high and high school years. Through the time spent with his dad, he learned the value of hard work, and his dad became his hero and best friend. They made plans to go into business together—but, once again, God had other plans.

Jack's parents hosted many visiting preachers in their home during his growing-up years. A couple of these preachers challenged him to pray about going into full-time Christian service, which he agreed to do. During his senior year of high school, he became burdened about the salvation of his two best buddies. After praying for several hours every night for Jeff and Jerry to become Christians, he was able to witness to them one night after a Jack Van Impe Crusade. The next morning, both friends informed him that they had accepted Christ. That night, he jumped in bed relieved that he would no longer have to pray for his friends' salvation. Not being able to sleep, however, he got out of bed, fell to his knees, and began to pray again. The love of God flowed over him as he prayed in his bedroom that night, and the light of the Holy Spirit illuminated the room. Sometime during that night, the call of God to preach became very obvious, and Jack Schaap surrendered to that very definite call during the wee hours of the morning. When he shared with his mother what had happened, she told him that she had been praying for him to be a preacher ever since her accident as a 15-year-old girl.

Pastor Chuck Surret, Jack's caring pastor during his teenage years, advised him to attend Pillsbury Baptist Bible College in Minnesota. This he did for a year and a half. However, after his first year of college, a new pastor named Jim Binney came to Bro. Schaap's home church. Bro. Binney was a Hyles-Anderson College graduate and pointed Jack to Hyles-Anderson College. He followed the advice of his pastor and arrived at Hyles-Anderson College in January of 1977. Through some unusual experiences, he met and started dating Cindy Hyles about six weeks after his arrival. After two dates, both were convinced that they had found God's will for their life's mate. Brother Schaap graduated from college in May of 1978 with his bachelor's degree in pastoral theology and received his master's degree in May of 1979. On June 1, 1979, he and Cindy were married.

Jack Schaap began teaching Bible at Hyles-Anderson College the fall after he and Cindy were married. Five years later, he became an assistant to the president. He received an honorary doctorate from Hyles-Anderson College in 1994. Then, on June 4, 1996, Dr. Schaap became the vice president of Hyles-Anderson College. During his time at the college, Dr. Schaap traveled

extensively across America and became known as one of America's premier preachers, especially to teenagers. He was also a bus captain, starting with one bus and six riders. Under his leadership, the route grew to need six buses, seeing high days of over 350.

On March 7, 2001, following the death of his father-in-law and mentor, Dr. Jack Hyles, Dr. Schaap was voted in as pastor of the great First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, with an overwhelming 96-percent vote in favor of his becoming pastor.

In the ten years that Pastor Schaap has been its pastor, the First Baptist Church of Hammond has seen amazing growth, with the average weekly attendance more than doubling. This growth caused the need for a new auditorium; so in March of 2005, the First Baptist Church moved into a new 7500-seat auditorium and, throughout that same year, saw over 25,000 converts baptized.

Also during his ten-year tenure as pastor, Pastor Schaap has led the First Baptist Church in starting many new ministries including the Chapel Ministry, Responsibility USA (a ministry to public school teens), Reformers Unanimous (an addiction program), and dozens of new adult Sunday school classes for a total of 74.

The First Baptist Church, under the leadership of Pastor Schaap, hosts three nationwide conferences each year—Pastors' School in March, Youth Conference in July, and the Christian Womanhood Spectacular in October. In addition to these conferences, Pastor Schaap also travels to preach around the country. His lifelong interest in aviation that began when he earned his pilot's license as a teenager has come to fruition as he flies to speak out of town.

Pastor Schaap superintends more than 3000 Christian young people in five different church-operated, private Christian schools. He is the chancellor of Hyles-Anderson College, a private Bible college operated by the First Baptist Church for the purpose of training preachers, missionaries, and Christian educators.

Pastor Schaap, who is known for his heart for world missions, oversees the operations of FBMI (Fundamental Baptist Missions International), which currently has 150 active missionaries. Since the inception of a Faith Promise Giving program, the church has seen its missions giving rise from \$85,000 to a pledged \$1.3 million for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

A few years ago, the first [mission team](#) was sent from the First Baptist Church to an oppressive country. As of September 2011, this team has seen 18 churches planted, with 10,394 trusting Jesus Christ as their Saviour and 1,167 of them following in believer's baptism. A second [mission team, Team Ghana](#), was sent to Ghana, West Africa, in November of 2006. This team has seen 17 churches planted, with 467,596 people saved and 7,265 baptized. [Hyles-Anderson College of West Africa](#) was founded there in January of 2008. The college has graduated 38 students. In May of 2008, a third [mission team, Team Thailand](#), was sent to Bangkok, Thailand. Since their arrival they have planted two churches, with 29,169 people saved and 1,593 baptized. In June of 2010, a fourth [mission team, Team Indo-Philippines](#), went to the Philippines. So far they have planted the [International Baptist Church](#) with the [International Baptist Bible Institute](#) and seen 7,098 saved and 203 baptized. In October 2011 a fifth team is leaving to serve in a restricted Asian country. Some of this team will continue on deputation to leave for the field at a later date. This team will be starting a Bible college and training national pastors to multiply churches. A sixth [mission team, Team Peru](#), is currently on deputation in preparation to go to Lima, Peru. A seventh team is currently preparing to serve in a Muslim country.

Pastor Schaap's other passion is the starting of local churches. In addition to the churches being started by FBMI Team Missions, First Baptist Church has started several churches locally. The Chapel Ministry has two churches: one in Gary, Indiana, and one in South Holland, Illinois. In addition, 12 churches have been started under the name Chicago Baptist Church in various locations throughout Chicagoland, with plans to start a total of 100. Also, Pastor Schaap personally pastors a second church, First Baptist Church's south campus—[South Point Baptist Church](#)—which was started recently in Crown Point, Indiana. The most recent churches to be started by First Baptist Church are 12 house churches within the city of Hammond as part of an outreach program called the Hammond Initiative.

Pastor and Mrs. Schaap have been married for 32 years and have two children, Jaclynn and Ken. Jaclynn is married to Todd Weber, Junior High Youth Director at First Baptist Church, and is one of the church pianists. The Webers have four children: Lyndsay, Raymond, Alexys, and Jayke. Ken is married to Candace (Hooker) and teaches at Hyles-Anderson College. They have two children: Kenny and Chloe.

Those who know Pastor Jack Schaap best would describe him as a man with a passion for God.

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