

9-14-75

Hordville Baptists To Observe Centennial

First Baptist Church in Hordville will observe its 100th anniversary on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 16 and 17.

The Rev. Paul Lundgren, executive secretary of the Great Plains Baptist Conference will be the guest speaker with six former pastors attending and taking part in the festivities.

Pastor John W. Wilzewske will preside over the centennial observance which will start Saturday at 2 p.m. with a memorial service in the Lindale Cemetery which is located southeast of Hordville.

A centennial banquet will be served in the high school auditorium at 6:30 p.m.

A Centennial Worship Service will be held Sunday at 10 a.m. in the church.

At noon, a pot-luck dinner will be served in the high school auditorium. This will be followed by a closing service at 2 p.m.

The Hordville First Baptist Church had its beginning in December of 1878 when it was organized by a group of Swedish immigrants.

The 17 charter members were Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. John Hanquist, Bengt Peterson, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Frojd, Mr. and Mrs. John Benson, Christina Benson, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. August Lind, John Rydson and Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Johnson.

These people, along with others, had been involved with the Stromsburg Baptist Church after receiving baptism.

The distance between Hordville and Stromsburg was too great in those days for regular church attendance so a local church was started.

C. J. Chader served as the first pastor then A. F. Palm and C. J. Necker. All three were local residents.

MET IN SCHOOLS

The first meetings were held in school houses in the area. Membership was small and finances scarce, according to a historical account.

"When their financial problems first met them in the spring of 1879, it was decided by the common consent . . . to levy a fee to the amount of five cents per member per week.

"Later on, it was decided that a certain percent of the crop raised by each member should

go into the church treasury.

"Evidently this did not prove satisfactory, for only a little later each member was taxed five dollars for every 40 acres of land owned by him."

"This may seem an odd method for supporting a church, but for those people, this is what they chose to do," Pastor Wilzewske said.

In 1886, the church was built. It was located two miles east of Hordville, just south of what is today the LeRoy Nelson farm.

In 1905, the church was host to the Swedish Baptist General Conference. Two tents were arranged to house the crowd and where food could be cooked and served.

MOVE TO HORDVILLE

In 1920, the church building was moved from the country to the present location in Hordville. It was remodeled and improved at this time.

In the early 1930's, drought and depression hit Nebraska. The church experienced financial reverses and nearly half of the congregation left the area to find better conditions elsewhere.

The Hordville First Baptist Church now has 62 members. Active ministries include Women's Missionary Society, Women's Bible Study, Sunday School, Youth Program and support of many Baptist General Conference and District ministries.

The Rev. John Wilzewske has served as pastor since August, 1976.

In April, 1978, the church hosted the Great Plains Baptist Conference annual meeting in which 30 churches were represented.

All area residents are invited and urged to participate in the Hordville Baptist Centennial observances.