

THE BEGINNINGS

The first page of the story of Community Bible Chapel

In July of 2012, CBC will be 50 years old—a milestone, and hopefully, a standing stone of God's work in and through us. In preparation, we'd like to devote space in the next few newsletters to tell the story.

In August of 2002, we celebrated 40 years. The following is a revision of the newsletter piece written then which was based on notes by Doris Swanson, one of the original members, and my memories as a child of seven.

In early April of 1962, the beginning of the break with the Covenant Church was surfacing. At issue was the liberalism creeping into the denomination in regard to such fundamental truths as the virgin birth of Christ, inerrancy of the Bible, eternal security. These were being disputed and questioned at the seminary where all the prospective pastors were being trained. Though the local church didn't teach this liberal theology, any future pastors potentially could, and the eight families who would become the Chapel had 26 children collectively whom they wanted to raise in the truth.

During April and May, the matter of dropping the affiliation with the Covenant Conference was raised and voted upon with the desire of a 2/3 vote. The narrow margin of 26 for independence to 24 to stay reflected the rip that was to come in families and friendships.

"...those who wanted to go independent felt a great burden on their hearts and, as a result, held a meeting at the Lyle Hulce home on Tuesday night, May 5. We discussed having an independent church... We had a prayer time when we asked the Lord to lead and guide where He would want."

The group began to meet for Bible study and prayer every Monday night at various homes with Rudy Olson often leading. By late July quite a few families were no longer attending the Covenant Church and a congregational meeting there July 19 made it clear, *"...the Lord was speaking to our hearts. We made our decision that night. We would follow as the Lord led us... We talked about building a church. We took count of the approximate amount of money that would come in each month, which amounted to \$95. We were very burdened that night and knew we must be of great faith if we were to carry through our plans... Rudy Olson had offered us a piece of property on US2 for our church..."*

Sunday, July 29, 1962, was the first official Sunday with Sunday School and the church service being held at the Hulce's home. Bob Danielson spoke and 42 attended. The Sunday evening service was down on the Alfredson's farm out on the lawn where they sang, prayed, and listened to Bob D. speak again; 48 attended.

On August 1, the men had an organizational meeting. They looked at the Pine Creek schoolhouse where the church would meet on Sunday's until the church building was ready. August 5 was the first Sunday at the schoolhouse, and on August 6 the name "Community Bible Chapel" was chosen by the group at Bible study at Sandy Olson's home.

Election of officers for the church was held at Mil Asp's cottage on Aug. 22 with Ed Olson as chairman, Lyle Hulce as vice-chairman, Al Thompson as secretary, Dick Swanson as treasurer, Ivar Alfredson as vice treasurer, Jerry Sundstrom as Sunday school superintendent, and Bob Danielson as head of youth.

The building was ordered on August 23 and would cost \$6,000. On August 25th the men hauled gravel; from then on every available night and Saturday they worked on the building.

September and October of 1962 were busy times. Besides the physical work on the building, they organized Sunday school, Boys Brigade and Pioneer Girls, and worked on a constitution. *"We had our first services in our Chapel on Sunday November 4. We were in the rough, but we were very happy and felt the Lord's presence..."* Many more "first's" were to follow: Nov. 8 the first Sunday school teachers meeting preparing pieces and songs for the Christmas program; Nov. 11 the first time the men's trio (Bob D. Dick Swanson, and Jerry Sundstrom) sang; Nov. 25 the first baby born was Linda Hulce, daughter of Lyle and Gloria; Dec. 23 the first Christmas program on Sunday night.

With the new year of 1963 beginning, a meeting held on January 8, concerned calling a pastor to lead them. Pastor William Taylor from the Bible Church in Bark River would be the man.

Doris ended her notes that winter with *"Thus far we purchased spoons, chairs, tables, rhythm band, song books, piano, pulpit, communion set. We see many changes in our Chapel. We have much to do on it yet before it is completed, but our main concern is winning souls to Thee and bringing to church those who are not attending any. The Lord has sent many blessings. He indeed has been good!"*

For nearly 50 years God's faithfulness has accomplished His work through His people here. This story is intended to turn our hearts to Him in thanksgiving as we look back and in trust as we look ahead. This is just the first page of our past.