**Anniversary Poem**

In September, 1860
A hundred years ago,
A group of men and women met
Who loved our Lord, you know.

A Pastor, by the name of Smith
Met with a group of eight
At the schoolhouse in Waterville
September second was the date.

They talked about salvation -
God's love that satisfies,
Of belief, and the Baptism,
Then planned to organize.

A Baptist Church in Waterville -
With purpose strong and true,
To preach God's Word completely -
And live it daily too.

They talked, they prayed, the hour grew late
They motioned to adjourn,
And sought God's guidance daily
All along the way.

They met again as scheduled -
All bought their wives along.
A church was born that evening
'Mid scripture, prayer, and song.

"First Baptist Church of Christ",
A title so impressive,
Was chosen by this early group
Could it be more expressive?

In 1882 they built
The church upon the hill.
As safely in His will we trod.
And how they prayed and labored
To try to pay the bill.

The records list the Pastors,
Who loved and labored here.
Of those who came and lingered
To serve our Savior, dear.

They had a missionary challenge,
These fold at Waterville,
And mothered a mission church
At nearby Kinneyville.

Through these hundred years
The church stood firm and strong
Spreading the Gospel message
To all who came along.

So today we honor
Those godly saints of old,
Who organized and built our church,
And walk the "streets of gold."

The pastor and the people
Still strive the lost to win,
By presenting God's Word
That cleanses from all sin.

And so we labor on
Till our course is run;
Giving God the glory,
For great things He has done.

Time marches on, 'tis eighty-four
And mighty changes come and go,
But through it all God leads the way
All we have to do is follow.

In the year of nineteen eighty
They talked, they prayed, the hour grew late
They motioned to adjourn,
To meet again the sixteenth, that God's will they might discern.

We bought seven acres of land
During this two week interval,
East of town on Highway Sixty
Was a hillside of weeds and sand.

It wasn't much of a prospect,
Because it meant a lot of work
But through it all God leads the way
All we have to do is follow.

In the year of nineteen eighty,
They talked about salvation -
God's love that satisfies,
Of belief, and the Baptism,
Then planned to organize.

A new church was born
That evening 'mid scripture, prayer, and song.
"First Baptist Church of Christ",
As we planned to build a new church
With prayers, our plans were perfected.

Today we dedicate our church
As a witness from man to God
For the victory accomplished
Was chosen by this early group
Could it be more expressive?

"Faithful to all Generations" was selected as the theme for 2010 reminding us of God's faithfulness that has preserved this congregation. Each week of 2010 the focus of the sermon has been on "The True Story of God", a journey through the Bible as God’s story is unveiled throughout history. The True Story of God is the story of the God who creates and recreates for His Glory and for our good.

Celebrating 150 Years of God’s Faithfulness

In the year of 1857, the region currently known as Waterville, Minnesota was settled. The village of Waterville moved progressively forward and the population continued to enlarge. A wide variety of businesses (furniture making, ice harvesting, clothing manufacturing) and the good fishing drew a growing population base.

The following are excerpts from a church document titled Tracing the Steps of First Baptist Church of Waterville.

"On September 2, 1860 a group of believers met at the school house with Rev. E.S. Smith in anticipation of organizing a church. Two weeks later, on September 16, 1860 while meeting at Paquins Hall these believers organized the First Baptist Church of Christ in Waterville, MN. This important event in Waterville came only two years after the MN Territory became a state in 1858. This event also preceded the election of this nation's 16th president, Abraham Lincoln, November of 1860.

"This church was started during a period of American history plagued by inner turmoil. For the first four years of this church's existence, the nation was racked by the perils of the War between the States which began on April 12, 1861, and ended on May 26, 1865. In addition to the heartache caused by the Civil War, on April 14, 1865, President Lincoln was assassinated at the hand of John Wilkes Booth. In the midst of all that had occurred, the truth of Daniel 4:32 remained; God was in control.

"In 1880 the church incorporated and the name was then changed to the First Baptist Church. Two years follow its incorporation, on August 11, 1882, it was voted to erect the original church building on the previous site, located on East Paquin Street. The building was to be 37 ft. wide by 56 ft. long with two 12ft. by 12 ft. towers in the front. The cost of the building, including one coat of paint, came to $325...

"On May 1, 1980 the present site of First Baptist was purchased under the leadership of Dr. R.A Sanders... the first service in the new building was held on June 10, 1984."

In 2007 the church began a construction phase to add nearly 5,000 square feet of much needed space. The portico was added along with several classrooms, additional restrooms, offices and the lobby quadrupled in size. Tucked in the southeast corner of the lobby The King’s Café was built as a small coffee shop complete with a corner fireplace.

In anticipation of this year’s milestone, “Faithful to all Generations” was selected as the theme for 2010 reminding everyone of why this church is still going strong after a century and a half. The church is convinced that it is God's faithfulness that has preserved this congregation. Each week of 2010 the focus of the sermon has been on “The True Story of God”, a journey through the Bible as God’s story is unveiled throughout history. The True Story of God is the God who creates and recreates for His glory and our good.

For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations. Ps. 100:5

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The true story of God is the story of the God who creates and recreates for His Glory and for our good.
Note from Pastor Bernard Frey at the 100th Anniversary

September 1960

"...together we thank God for what has been done for the Master..." We do know that there is a day coming when the Divine Record will be opened, and everyone shall receive as their due or just share and part that we have had in the up-building of the Church of the Living God... Our sincere prayer for you is that you may continue to walk in the truth by the power of the Holy Spirit until He shall come and receive us all to the mansion not made by hands, eternal in heaven.

Site purchased for new Baptist church

"Have Faith in God" is the theme of the First Baptist Church of Waterville. The people of the First Baptist Church are excited about the future six of their new church building. The church recently purchased seven acres of land located on High Street in the west of Smith's Auto Body. Presently, the building committee is working with the architect to plan the new facility. The First Baptist Church stands on the Bible as the only rule for faith and practice. The pastor of the church, Randy A. Sanders, is pictured above.

Note From Pastor Gene

First Baptist Church of Waterville has been around since it was organized on September 16, 1860...yeah, God! This church has weathered civil war, world wars, famine, local and national economic collapse, internal turmoil, tears, peace, plenty, laughter, hugs and high-fives. What is a church anyway? Is it a building? Is it a gathering of people? Is it a communion dispenser? Is it a "spiritual program" vending machine? What is it?

The local church is a gift from the living God to people in a geographic region. It consists of men, women and girls who have come to a conclusion that they need Someone beyond themselves...JESUS. A man, woman, boy or girl gets Jesus when, with a brokenness of spirit and humble heart, he or she confesses acts of rebellion and evil against God, others and self, and receives the abundant and free gift of God's grace.

As I have been praying about a passage to proclaim to each man, woman, boy and girl on our 150th anniversary, God has made it clear to me that we are to soak in a letter written to a local church. Ephesians 2:19-22 reads, So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. You see, the church is a dwelling place for God. So when little girls and boys and their moms and dads go through good times and those bad times...God shows up. He is there personally, as well as in the lives of other people who were once strangers and aliens and illegals but now are saints and family. This is not something new, it was God's plan and this amazing "safe-house" has its foundation in those first followers of Jesus as wells as the prophets of old...in fact, Jesus Christ holds it all together. Today we are celebrating this amazing gift...the church...your church...First Baptist Church of Waterville, Minnesota. Please know that each of you makes my heart smile...I love you. ~Pastor

A BIG THANK YOU to all those who helped with the details and activities of the weekend!

From the 1860 Old Waterville School for the kids, to a tie dye activity for the family...from the gospel celebration & pie social, to a historical walk through time...from speakers Don Callahan, Dr. Randy Sanders, Pastor Bryan Surratt & Pastor Gene Witte, to a pork roast sandwich lunch...from a commemorative painting to great fellowship and time spent together...THANKS FOR AN INCREDIBLE WEEKEND!

In Him you (FCB Waterville) also are being built together into a dwelling place for God... (Eph. 2:19-22)

1. E.S. Smith
   Sept. 1860 - July 1863
2. A.D. Williams
   July 1887 - July 1870
3. A.D. Luce
   Dec. 1870 - June 1871
4. Ebenezer Thompson
   Oct. 1871 - Dec. 1873
5. John Hinton
   Sept. 1876 - Dec. 1887
6. G. N. Ansley
   May 1877 - July 1879
7. J. S. Cox
   Aug. 1879 - Dec. 1885
8. N.E. Chapman
   Dec. 1885 - Mar. 1898
9. C.R. Lipton
   July 1888 - July 1894
10. G.E. Rowe
    April 1892 - Jan. 1894
11. C. A. Reath
    June 1894 - Dec. 1896
12. S. E. Moon
    1897 - July 1901
13. Wm. Godden
    July 1901 - May 1903
14. C.H. Galligan
    July 1903 - Sept. 1905
15. J.P. Hall
    Oct. 1905 - Sept. 1908
16. M.L. Reynolds
    April 1910 - 1912
17. Pastor Stockon
    Apr. 1910 - 1912
18. Pastor Hall
    May 1912 - Sept. 1915
19. Joe Bilman
    Dec. 1912 - Sept. 1915
20. J.A. Dawning
    1914-1925
21. S.Bilman
    1925 - 1927
22. Pastor Raher
    July 1927 - 1928
23. Edward Pearson
    July 1928 - 1929
24. Ardel Lock
    1930-1942
25. C.F. Wilson
    Jan. 1925 - 1927
26. Stanley Knoll
    June 1927 - June 1928
27. Maurice M. Powers
    Sept. 1931 - Jan. 1933
28. E. Brandt
    June 1933 - Jan. 1935
29. Janice Smith
    Dec. 1935 - May 1941
30. Ossell Summers
    Nov. 1941 - Nov. 1944
31. Archie Nelson
    Nov. 1944 - Sept. 1944
32. John Hill
    Sept. 1944 - 1951
33. Henry Willen
    1951 - 1953
34. John Polson
    May 1953 - Oct. 1965
35. Richard Krenz
    May 1965 - May 1966
36. Francis Grubbs
    June 1967 - May 1970
37. B.H. Frey
    June 1969 - Sept. 1961
38. Oliver Sandahl
    June 1961 - June 1972
39. Eugene Green
    April 1972 - Apr. 1979
40. Randy A. Sanders
    Aug. 1979 - Aug. 1988
41. Eugene A. Witte
    Aug. 1988 to present

A NEW WORSHIP CENTER was dedicated on May 21, 1962. A new Fellowship Hall was added to the east side of the building in 1984.