

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, LONG PRAIRIE

TWIST, REVEREND PAUL; SARGAANT, GRACE; and CARLSON, MARIE

Reverend Twist and two long-time congregation members relate the history of Long Prairie as well as discussing the role of the Baptist Church in the community. Rev. Twist tells about the church sponsored radio broadcast he delivers every morning. Also covered is the church's youth program.

INTERVIEWERS: John LeDoux and Al Nielsen

DATE: July 19, 1979

SUBJECTS COVERED: Tape 1 Side 1

010 PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF REV. PAUL TWIST:

- 011 Paul Jonathon Twist was born on August 17, 1930.
- 014 He was born in Berlin, WI, on his grandparent's farm.
- 015 He grew up in Antego, WI.
- 016 He attended school in Antego.
- 018 His father was a missionary for the American Sunday School Union.
- 019 He went to Northwestern College in Minneapolis after graduating from high school.
- 020 He was a pastor at Lancaster, WI, and he took further college at Southwest State Teacher's College for about four and a half years.
- 023 He then moved to Gillette, WI, (near Green Bay) and was a pastor at the Gillette Baptist Church for nine years.
- 024 In 1965 he moved to Long Prairie.
- 030 Long Prairie is with the Conservative Baptist Association.
- 032 His father was a Baptist; he went into the ministry and was raised a Methodist.
- 033 His mother was an American Baptist.
- 035 The American Sunday School Union was an interdenominational organization that conducted Sunday School out in the rural area where there were no churches.
- 038 After he went to Northwestern College, he was persuaded to go into the Baptist ministry.
- 040 The first church he pastored at was previously pastored by his uncle.
- 042 His uncle became sick and passed away; he stayed on there.
- 066 The population at Lancaster, WI, is 3500.

071 PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF GRACE SARGAANT:

- 094 Grace Sargaant was born on August 8, 1888 around Prairie Township.
- 098 She is single.
- 099 She grew up on a farm until she started high school.
- 102 She has lived in Long Prairie all her life except for a few years when she taught school.
- 104 She taught second grade.
- 105 She taught in Glenwood and Bemidji.
- 108 She was a member of the Round Prairie Congregational Church originally.
- 112 She has been active in the First Baptist Church, but she hasn't joined yet.

116 PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF MARIE CARLSON:

- 118 Marie Sargaant was born on December 23, 1890 around Long Prairie.
122 She was a teacher like her sister Grace.
129 At the time of World War I, she took nurse's training.
131 She did county nursing until she was married in 1930.
134 Her husband's name is John Carlson.
136 She taught at Glenwood, Long Prairie, Crookston, and Two Harbors.
143 She became a member of the Long Prairie Church when she was fourteen years old.

148 CHURCH HISTORY:

- 154 A minister from the East came and had a home on Fairy Lake.
159 Eventually he moved to Sauk Center and established a Baptist church.
161 Three men of the church moved to Long Prairie to establish a feed and grocery store.
167 In 1872 the church was officially organized in Long Prairie.
173 Baptist missionaries did work along the railroad where people were living.
202 Long Prairie used to be a Indian Town in the 1850's.
221 The Baptist church was the first building to be built.
232 In 1873 the first church structure was built.
245 In 1910 they moved the church next door and added on to it, also.
251 In 1966 they moved again and built a new church; it is on a swamp.
291 People moved to Minnesota because they liked the country.
301 Germans, Scandinavians, and Polish started to come in around the 1860's.
323 The Baptist church had 21 chartered members back then; now they have about 200.
337 It has been a steady growth.
376 Now they have a mixture of nationalities because of Hart's Press (a printing business); people move into town to work here and join the church.
411 In 1921 Hart's Press was formed; it prints religious magazines.
436 It does about four to five million dollars a year of business.
440 Cathedral and Todd Presses print the church bulletins.
471 The presses grew from a store magazine.
502 Long Prairie is the fourth largest in the state to receive mail; they are behind the Twin Cities, Duluth, and Rochester.
525 English was the language that has been used all the time.
541 The church has a strong youth program.
558 They have a daily radio program for five days a week for nine minutes.

SUBJECTS COVERED: Tape 1 Side 2

008 CHURCH HISTORY:

- 008 The radio audience is about 10,000 to 20,000 people.
012 They have a building at the County Fair; they show religious films.
021 The fairgrounds for Todd County is in Long Prairie.

- 032 People who listen to the radio program can come in for counseling.
 042 The church pays \$4,000 (a straight commercial rate) for this radio program.
 046 It has been on the air for eight years.
 054 It is called the Key for Happiness.
 064 The church has weekly services at the nursing home.
 082 Rev. Twist preaches morning and evening on Sundays.
 083 On Wednesday evenings the church has a mid-week service.
 085 Church administration, visitation or calling, hospital calls, the radio program, and counseling are some of Rev. Twist's duties.
 102 He tries to counsel in his services.
 119 Many people from other denominations come to the church for counseling.
 145 The church government has not changed over the years.
 147 The church is a congregational form of government that is run by the people.
 148 The people elect a board of deacons that take care of the spiritual needs; the board of trustees handle the physical needs of the church.
 152 A Christian Education Committee takes care of the selection of Sunday School teachers in the youth program.
 155 A Mission Committee takes care of the missionary emphasis of the church; it is a very strong program.
 158 42% of the church's income went to the missionary work.
 167 The church is part of the Conservative Baptist Fellowship (located near Wheaton, IL), but they are an independent church.
 198 They used to be part of the American Baptist Convention.
 201 In the 1940's there were doctrinal differences in the church.
 220 In 1947 they organized the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society; they had a fellowship of churches.
 254 In the 1960's a group pulled out of the organization.
 270 The church supports world-wide missions.
 329 They are a country church in a sense, but they have a strong influence of the press.
 333 They have few farmers as congregational members.
 412 They have a church bus for the youth outings.
 466 Rev. Twist feels that the pastor needs some other contact besides the church.
 492 He wants his people to be involved in political things instead of him.
 553 The Sunday School picnic has died out.

SUBJECTS COVERED: Tape 2 Side 1

020 CHURCH HISTORY:

- 020 The church has Thanksgiving, Easter Sunrise, and New Year's Eve services.
 065 The church has an eight-day Missionary Conference, a Bible Conference, and children's meetings.
 070 They are involved in a Bible Camp (near Upsala); it runs for about nine weeks in the summer.
 084 Transportation in the old days was with trains and horses.

- 092 Long Prairie was half its size (population 1,300) when Grace and Marie were growing up.
- 097 The area by the church has grown the most.
- 103 The school where Grace and Marie went to on the north end has been torn down.
- 116 Membership is a small percentage compared to the other congregations around them.
- 134 The church was built in 1966 and 1967; they have a couple thousand dollars left to pay on the mortgage.
- 136 The parsonage is all paid for.
- 138 \$40,000 goes to the foreign missions.
- 140 Rev. Twist's assistant works full-time and takes care of the youth and Christian education.
- 150 In Bertram, there is a small church with no pastor, and seven or eight men from the Long Prairie church go and conduct services there on Sundays.
- 153 A retired minister, who is a member of the Long Prairie church, is pastoring at Long Prairie Community Church.
- 155 At Reynolds they have men filling in for the pastor who just left that church.
- 169 Smaller churches use the First Baptist Church of Long Prairie for weddings and funerals because it is bigger than theirs.
- 188 Rev. Twist feels that there is a need for the smaller churches.