

## SOUTH ISANTI BAPTIST CHURCH

The Pastor of South Isanti Baptist Church and long time congregational members discuss the Early Church History and how it was formed. The members all give their full name and where they came from, and some personal background. The people interviewed were: Gorden Beneferd Fredeen, Elsie Fredeen, Mrs. Clifford Johnson, and Robert Land Gustason, pastor.

This tape informs us of the early church history of South Isanti Baptist Church. How the church came into existence from the church in Cambridge.

INTERVIEWER: John LeDoux

DATE: September 28, 1978

SUBJECTS COVERED: Tape 1 Side 1

006 PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- 006 Gorden Beneferd Fredeen
- 009 Born June 13, 1904.
- 011 Born in this country, right across the road from the church.
- 013 Parents were also born in this country.
- 015 Parents were farming most of the time.
- 017 Gorden and his wife do not farm.
- 020 He has been a member of the church all of his life.
- 021 Elsie Fredeen.
- 023 She joined here in 1934.
- 025 She has been a Baptist all of her life.
- 028 Her maiden name was Elsie England.
- 030 Her parents were both born in Sweden.
- 032 Her parents are from Darlana.
- 034 Fredeen is a Swedish name.
- 036 Her parents were farmers.
- 042 Mrs. Clifford Johnson (Ruby)
- 044 She was born on December 11, 1906.
- 046 Parents were born in Sweden in the Northern part.
- 051 Her dad's parents, and mother's parents were from the same area although they met in this country.
- 057 Her parents came here in 1880.
- 058 They were Baptists in Sweden at the time, but the Baptists weren't allowed as churches. They were banished.
- 065 Her maiden name was Engrum.
- 067 Her husband is a retired farmer.
- 069 Her parents were also farmers.
- 071 She was baptized in her 14th year.
- 077 Robert Land Gustason.
- 079 He was born on January 5, 1950.
- 081 Graduated from Bethal College as a History-Anthropology major, and from Bethal Seminary.

- 084 His cousin was an influence in leading him to the ministry.  
089 His first congregation is here, since graduating from the seminary.  
094 He has been here for 9 or 10 years.

097 HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

- 097 Church was organized in 1860 in Cambridge.  
104 The original church was in Cambridge.  
136 Sometime before the turn of the century, the church split.  
156 No one here at this interview knows exactly how the split came about.  
177 The services switched from Swedish to English in the early 1920's.  
192 Instances of Swedish in schools are explained.  
203 There was a dissatisfaction of having to speak English, and having services in English.  
235 All the morning services were in Swedish at the beginning.  
238 One Sunday a month the services were in English to begin with.  
248 The Swedish Church was changed because the schools taught in English.  
267 This church always had its own pastor.

271 PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH

- 271 The church's membership has remained constant.  
294 It is an American Nationality with a Swedish background.  
306 Most of the people from this church work out, there are only about 3 or 4 farmers.  
311 People come from small towns around here.  
316 Swedish customs are observed at Christmas.  
328 Women's Groups and youth groups were active since the beginnings of the church.  
342 There is a significant number of young people in the church today.  
371 An estimate of the size of the membership today is 130.  
376 The town of Isanti in the past few years has grown considerably.  
379 The present source of the town growing, is industry.  
382 The town has a larger population than back in the 20's or 30's.  
398 The church is quite independent, as far as relation to a general conference.  
415 The congregation of the church pays all of the pastor's salary.  
418 You have to have 3/4 of a vote to have a pastor.

445 HISTORY OF THE CHURCH CONT?

- 445 The church was remodeled in 1916.  
472 The original church was believed to be built around 1890.  
480 We are the original church Body and Cambridge is the original location.  
523 The new church was finished on May 23 and 24 of 1890, at least, that is when it was appointed.

SUBJECTS COVERED: Tape 1 Side 2

000 HISTORY OF THE CHURCH CONT.

- 000 The beginning of Christian work in our community was in 1875 in a rural area.

- 007 Later, the church was built in Isanti.
- 009 In 1887 the membership of the church was 213.
- 015 The original school house is over 100 years old and is still standing to this day.
- 035 The church is basically the same building.
- 044 There was no basement, but then they built one, when they remodeled.
- 049 The church came first when it was being remodeled.