

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - CAMBRIDGE, MINNESOTA

## PASTOR ALDEN LYNCH AND CHURCH MEMBER DEL BODIEN

Pastor Lynch and Mr. Bodien discuss the church's past and the church in modern times. The two men also talk of their backgrounds as well as their lives today.

INTERVIEWERS: John LeDoux and Al Nielsen

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SUBJECTS COVERED: Tape 1 Side 1

009 PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- 009 Pastor Alden Lynch  
 012 He was born January 3, 1930 in Rocky Ford, Colorado.  
 015 He went to college in Denver.  
 016 His religious training was at Dallas Theological Seminary.  
 017 In 1955 he became a minister with the Baptist General Conference.  
 019 This is the fifth church he has been appointed to.  
 021 His father was born in Oregon.  
 022 His mother was born in Missouri.  
 023 Both live in Colorado now.  
 026 The first church he served was in Pine Bluffs, Wyoming.  
 028 Pine Bluffs is a rural town in wheat and cattle country.  
 030 The second church he served was in Gothenburg, Nebraska.  
 033 The town has two original Pony Express stations.  
 040 The Oregon Trail runs through the Williams Ranch there.  
 042 Major crops in the area are corn and alfalfa.  
 043 The third church he served was the Union Park Baptist Church in Des Moines, Iowa. He served there six years.  
 045 Membership was 450.  
 052 The fourth church he served was the Brooklyn Center Baptist Church from 1969 to 1976.  
 054 There he served Americans of all descents(not just Swedish) and names Cambridge church members with relatives at Brooklyn Center Baptist Church.  
 065 In 1976 he was appointed to Cambridge.  
 067 Delanore O. Bodien  
 068 He was born July 8, 1907 in Cambridge, Minnesota.  
 071 His father was born in Darlarne, Sweden in 1879.  
 072 His mother was born in Pine County, Minnesota.  
 076 His father came to the U.S. in 1880 with his parents and one brother.  
 081 They settled in Bodem where they knew some people.  
 082 His grandfather was the first postmaster there.  
 091 In 1915 they moved to Cambridge.  
 104 They had come to the U.S. to escape religious intolerance.  
 113 Bodien went to Sweden in 1963.  
 120 He has lived in Cambridge all his life.  
 122 He was born on the Rum River - one block from his home now.

- 123 He graduated from high school in 1925.
- 124 He went to business college.
- 125 He obtained a job as a substitute clerk at the Cambridge Post Office.
- 127 In 1965 he retired as assistant postmaster after 36½ years.
- 130 Since then he has worked various jobs.
- 136 He has been a member of the church since 1927.

#### 145 HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

- 145 It was a daughter church of the Isanti churches.
- 146 The church originated in the home of Mr. Bodien's wife's grandparents in 1888.
- 154 Mrs. Bodien's grandparents were Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Wicklum.
- 157 18 members joined at the beginning out of need for a church.
- 169 Many people were settling in the area and it was too far to travel elsewhere to attend church.
- 182 There were many Swedish-Baptist churches in the Cambridge-Isanti area then - Rush Lake, Spring Vale, Fish Lake, Oxford, and two in Isanti.
- 220 The church belongs to the Baptist General Conference of America.
- 221 In 1969 the "of America" was dropped.
- 235 The first church building was put up in 1889.
- 237 It was repaired and enlarged in 1904.
- 247 In 1931 a new church was built - the present building.
- 252 The first building was on Third and Adams Streets.
- 255 The second building is on Third and Main Streets.
- 275 In the 1930's church services gradually changed from Swedish to English.
- 297 The change took place due to English-speaking people moving into Cambridge and because English was being taught in the schools.
- 343 The older members were unhappy with the change.

#### 362 DEVELOPMENT OF CAMBRIDGE

- 362 The business district is still on Main Street.
- 364 The buildings were wooden and streets dirt.
- 383 The church was in the new developing part of town then- southwest of the old part.
- 393 The river is high and causes flooding.
- 396 The bridge is in the same spot.
- 403 Farmers grew potatoes for their livelihood.
- 413 There was a sawmill on the riverbank and the town had a brick factory and a flourmill.
- 423 The state hospital was built in the 1920's and this led to town growth.

#### 457 CHURCH GROWTH

- 457 The biggest growth came after the campaign of a traveling evangelist in 1919 to 1921.
- 504 The first 20 years saw 250% growth by 1918.

- 509 The second 20 years saw 55% growth.  
529 This growth was due to the homogeneity of the people and because they had come out of religious intolerance in Sweden.  
549 The next 20 years saw minor growth.

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556 CHURCH GROWTH(cont.)

556 Membership then leveled off due to World War II which reduced growth, the commuting movement in the 1950's, which added to growth, and the overall growth of Cambridge.

594 CHANGES IN THE CHURCH

- 594 In the 1930's and 1940's there was a breakdown of the Swedish community.  
617 There may be a degree of racial or religious bigotry but there are no problems.  
627 Churches in Cambridge are cooperative in joint ventures.  
651 Before 1958, with Bob Marshall as pastor, the church was strong in Christian education.  
659 In 1970 an education wing was added.  
660 This was caused by church members trained in education.  
671 The church is involved with the hospital socially and religiously.  
679 They have a kinship program which is like Big Brothers and Big Sisters.  
681 This is now run by the county but floundering.  
687 The businessmen of the church are involved in community activities.  
700 Church members help out in religious instruction programs.  
708 There has been a youth program for the last five years.  
710 On Wednesday nights they have Family Night with various clubs for different age groups.  
719 The high school program has 80 to 90 young people from the whole community, causing consternation among other churches.  
734 The programs activities include informal activities, music, jokes, bike hikes, camping, and religious education.  
773 Children are an important part of the church.

801 PASTORAL DUTIES

- 801 Lynch has office hours in the morning and afternoon due to heavy administrative load.  
806 An assistant pastor takes care of visitation.  
810 He discusses work hours.  
840 He does not do as much counseling here as when at Brooklyn Center.  
856 He feels this is due to the want of privacy in Cambridge.  
865 He refers Cambridge people elsewhere and accepts referrals himself.  
867 Also, the Cambridge Clinic has a full time counselor.

899 URBAN AND RURAL CONTRASTED

- 899 Lynch feels there is more family mobility in the city.

- 928 Smaller communities are more tranquil.
- 937 He enjoys the sense of belonging to the Cambridge community and the church.
- 959 Bible teaching is stressed more in small towns.
- 965 There are more unchurched in the cities.

996 CHANGES IN THE CHURCH(cont.)

- 996 Today members participate more in the church.
- 1002 Duties are more delegated to members as teachers, supervisors, and administrators.
- 1061 Change of attitude towards worship has taken place. There is more participation.

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1126 SPECIAL FESTIVALS AND SERVICES

- 1126 ~~The~~ Ladies Missionary Society held semi-annual bazaars but this has faded out.
- 1132 There was an early morning Swedish Christmas service on Christmas Day called a Eulota.
- 1143 It was dropped in the 1950's due to an attendance drop and lack of interest on behalf of the administration and deacons.
- 1164 Bodien did not agree with dropping this service.
- 1211 Younger families want to establish their own traditions.
- 1214 The 5:00 Christmas Eve service is meaningful for them.

1229 CHURCH GOVERNMENT

- 1229 The church has a congregational government where final authority rests with the congregation.
- 1236 Any spending \$1500 over budget figures, selling or mortgaging property, bond issuing, or building programs are subject to congregational approval.
- 1245 The church has changed from a multiple board structure to a one board structure.
- 1246 It is rewriting its constitution to reflect this change.
- 1248 Advantages include centralized government and more people involved in committee work.
- 1262 The church is voluntarily affiliated with the other churches of its denomination.
- 1272 They belong to the Minnesota district of their denomination, one of many.
- 1279 The main headquarters are in Chicago.
- 1280 The headquarters coordinates overseas work, personnel in Christian education, publications and literature, as well as outreach into those churches uncovered by a district.

1299 CULTS

- 1299 Lynch believes the reason for cult growth is a desire for experience and feeling centered activities in the 1960's and 1970s.

- 1304 This vs. conceptual, philosophical, and theological activities.
- 1318 Rebellion was against the rigidity of the church as an institution.
- 1349 Cults are strongly one man centered.
- 1354 Cults leaders contradict the Bible if it does not suit his needs.
- 1357 Eastern mystical religions are attractive due to stress on brotherly love.
- 1386 Deprogramming has both good and bad effects.
- 1398 Young people have to sense an openness to them.
- 1402 They must use valid research to discover the truth.
- 1443 The Johnstown incident points out that churches are making sure they are alerting young people to the kind of individual who can lead them away from the Scriptures.

1491 CLERGY INVOLVEMENT IN CIVIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS

- 1491 In past, a pastor was called to work on the basis of need for religious teaching, preaching, and leadership.
- 1513 Now the social dimension is part of the church.
- 1523 Political involvement started in the 1950's and 1960's when government was not dealing with social issues.
- 1542 A pastor should be a leader within church life that the church wants.
- 1545 Be a part of the community and civic organizations.
- 1564 A pastor should not use the church platform for political proclamations.
- 1583 Government requirements for some financial accountability of large religious organizations is valid.
- 1592 The church organization has nothing to fear if honest to the public.

1621 BACKGROUND(cont.)

- 1621 Bodien was married in 1931.
- 1625 He has two daughters.
- 1628 His wife's maiden name is Majel Loren.
- 1633 She has worked as a librarian and schoolteacher.
- 1650 Pastor Lynch has three children-- Suzanne, John, and Jerry.
- 1661 His wife's maiden name is Mary Lou Smith.
- 1673 Bodien feels the challenge of the church today is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Tape 2 Side 2

1684 BACKGROUND(cont.)

- 1684 Lynch feels it is a challenge to the church to be open to the emotional, financial, and physical needs of the people.