

Bishop to preach Sunday

Church to kick off 125th anniversary

The church was organized in rural Cannon Falls as Swedish Evangelical Lutheran St. Ansgar's Congregation in 1869 - the same year the first transcontinental railroad was completed. From the first 32 Swedish immigrants who belonged to the church then, the congregation has grown to include 1,538 members.

During September and October, 1994, current members of St. Ansgar's congregation will conclude a year of celebration of the congregation's 125th anniversary with special church services and other activities.

The celebration theme is "Know the Past, Live the Future." Volunteers have been busy gathering photographs and other information, and there will be displays documenting the history of the congregation. At the

conclusion of the observance, a commemorative book will be printed.

Among the guest speakers at anniversary activities will be former pastor Dan Pearson as well as his daughter, Maureen Pearson Armstrong, who played organ at the church, and Pastor Clifford Swanson and Pastor Gary Olson, who both grew up in Cannon Falls as members of St. Ansgar's.

Sunday, Sept. 11, will be the kick-off service which precedes the 5 festival Sundays. Preaching will be Bishop Glenn Nycklemoe of the Southeast District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Congregation members will be given the opportunity to write down their memories associated with the local church, which will be included on a ribbon of

memories.

Each celebration Sunday will focus on a 25-year period in the congregation's history, and the customs, music, and folkways of the period will be included in the morning's worship service and forum. Skits written by member Linda Henderson will highlight each time period.

The anniversary celebration will wrap up with a special banquet and program on Saturday night, Oct. 15. The church service on Sunday, Oct. 16, will also mark the ordination of the first woman pastor in the ELCA, and St. Ansgar's Pastor Joanne Sorenson will preach.

Following the service, the church school students will plant a red maple tree on the church grounds to commemorate the anniversary year.