

150 YEARS AGO

On March 8, 1871, 150 years ago, Fredsville Danish Lutheran Church became an incorporated church. What do you know of Fredsville's history? It is very unique indeed! What brought the people to this spot in Grundy County, Iowa?

A year of celebrating and marking the 150th anniversary in 2021 has been trimmed down due to the uncertainty the pandemic has brought. However, history and stories will be shared and there will be opportunities to celebrate.

Acknowledging Fredsville's past also gives us the opportunity to look forward as we learn and grow from the experiences of the past 12 months and 150 years. Our ancestors faced dark days, hardships, and celebrations just like we do today. God is with us, just as He has been and always will be.

The following excerpt is taken from the book called "Growing Up Danish" by Elna M. Petersen - a descendent of the original pioneers. Elna grew up in the Fredsville community and church.

To talk about Fredsville Church, we must first talk about the village of Fredsville.

"The village of Fredsville was located near the crossing of two country roads a few miles west of Cedar Falls, Iowa. A number of Danish immigrants had settled in this area. Some were merchants, but many were farmers. In this part of Iowa, they found abundantly rich soil and climate particularly suited to the style of farming of which they were familiar.

The name "Fredsville" translated from the Danish means "Peaceful Village." True to its name, it was nestled in the dale between three of the highest gently rolling hills for miles around. The village was reminiscent of those the Danish immigrants had left behind when they came to America. It never was a "town" as we would imagine with carefully structured streets. Rather, it was a loose collection of a few small houses and businesses which were built near the crossing of the two rural roads. The people who lived in them had come here to support the nearby agrarian businesses. True to the custom of "The Old Country," the structures were loosely scattered, some adjacent to their business building, yet close enough that the residents walked house to business, house to church, or house to house. Walking a quarter of a mile to work or to church was just part of life and had not yet become "an exercise program."

Prayer:

Dear Lord, as we gather today to worship and give you praise, we also share in the praise given to you by this church's founding fathers and all the generations past. Their love for you inspired them then and inspires us today. As we learn about our past may the stories of our ancestors remind us - God is with us, then and now and always. Amen

Our gathering song today will be familiar to long time Fredsville members. It is often sung at funerals and though it is an "old song" the words are relevant today. "Our Father has Light in His Window".