

# First Baptist Church celebrates 100 years

By ERIK CHALHOUB

OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

**WATSONVILLE** — First Baptist Church of Watsonville will celebrate 100 years during a celebration Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Members say they feel like they are at home when attending the church, located on 101 Madison St., which pastor Allen Barnes noted is part of its welcoming atmosphere.

"We're focused on sharing and living out the Gospel of Jesus in Watsonville, Santa Cruz and Monterey counties and beyond," he said.

The church's roots date back to 1909, when Rev. A.J. Cable became the missionary pastor of two Baptist churches, one in Aromas and the other in Prunedale. However, many from Watsonville attended the services, which led to Ernest Edmondson and Rev. J.C. Colyar receiving a



Contributed

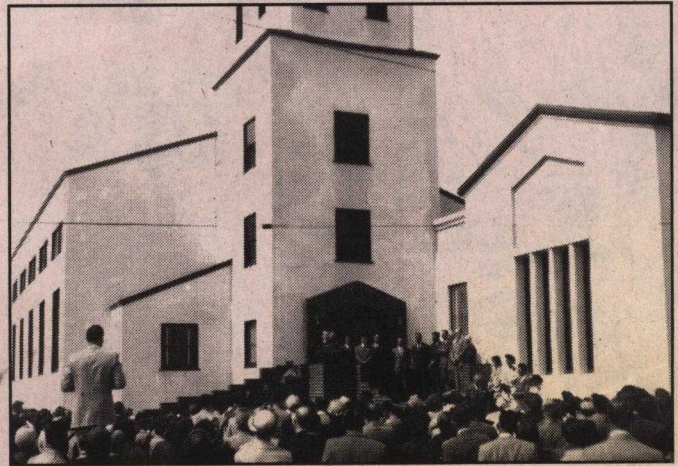
**First Baptist Church will celebrate 100 years Sunday.**

permit to construct a tent in Watsonville for gospel meetings.

The success of the meetings eventually led to the First Baptist Church of Watsonville being officially organized on Aug. 21, 1914, with 25 charter members.

The growing church then purchased a lot on the corner of Fifth and Lincoln streets. The new building opened on Oct. 18, 1914 and was dedicated on Nov. 1, 1914.

In the early 1940s, the church began plans for a new building on the corner of Madison and East Fifth streets. Thanks to a successful building fund, the basement, educational unit and chapel areas were built



Contributed

**First Baptist Church, as seen in 1914.**

for about \$78,000, completed in 1952.

Today, the church hosts a number of programs that aim to benefit youth and the community. In July, the church's youth summer camp raised \$800 for Second Harvest Food Bank.

In addition, church members serve monthly meals at the Watsonville Salvation Army and made blankets and meals for the Pajaro Women's Shelter.

First Baptist Church also has an on-site food pantry.

The church dedicates a portion of its budget to support missionaries around the world, including raising funds for a clean water project in Africa and sending youth teams to Navajo Indian Reservation to rehabilitate buildings and to Mexico to build homes.

For information, visit [www.fbcwatsonville.com](http://www.fbcwatsonville.com) or call 724-1311.