

United Presbyterian Church celebrates milestone

150th anniversary to be marked Sunday by displays, food, music and speakers

By TODD GUILD

OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

Watsonville United Presbyterian Church will celebrate its 150th anniversary Sunday with music, food and an opportunity to learn about the history of the church, which dates back to the days before railroads arrived in the area.

Midge Morrison, 84, moved to Watsonville in 1956 and immediately joined the church.

"Belonging to something as vital as the church is very important to me," she said. "I think the anniversary is very significant. It's amazing, in this day and age, when anything lasts that long."



Morrison said that the church is involved with many service projects that help the community, including helping the Salvation Army provide a weekly meal to needy people.

The church distributes food to 75 needy families. In addition, the church was one of the first organizations to become a food distribution center for Second Harvest Food Bank, said pastor Bruce Rowilson.

"It's our identity," he said of the church's efforts to help those in need. "It's who we are."

The celebration will include speakers, lunch and music, which will be a mixture of traditional gospel hymns and the more upbeat, modern music that the church has adapted in an effort to attract younger members.

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FAR LEFT: The United Presbyterian Church in 1942. (contributed photo) LEFT: The Rev. Bruce Rowilson stands next to the original church bell that was installed at United Presbyterian Church in 1866. The church will celebrate its 150th anniversary on Sunday.

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Attendees will also have an opportunity to browse different displays featuring the church's programs, such as the preschool and the parsonage.

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The celebration will begin at 9:30 a.m. Sunday with a meet-and-greet, followed by worship services at 10 a.m. A lunch will follow at 11:30 a.m., cooked by Gilroy Garlic Festival chefs Gene Sakahara and Sam Bozzo, a team known as SakaBozzo.

Anyone interested in attending is asked to RSVP to 724-4737.