

50 years ago:

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Forest Hills United Methodist Church was established in the St. Paul District on Sunday Dec. 10. Dr. Paul Metzger, superintendent of the St. Paul District of the Methodist Church, presided at the service.
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Church donates 50 of 50 for 50th

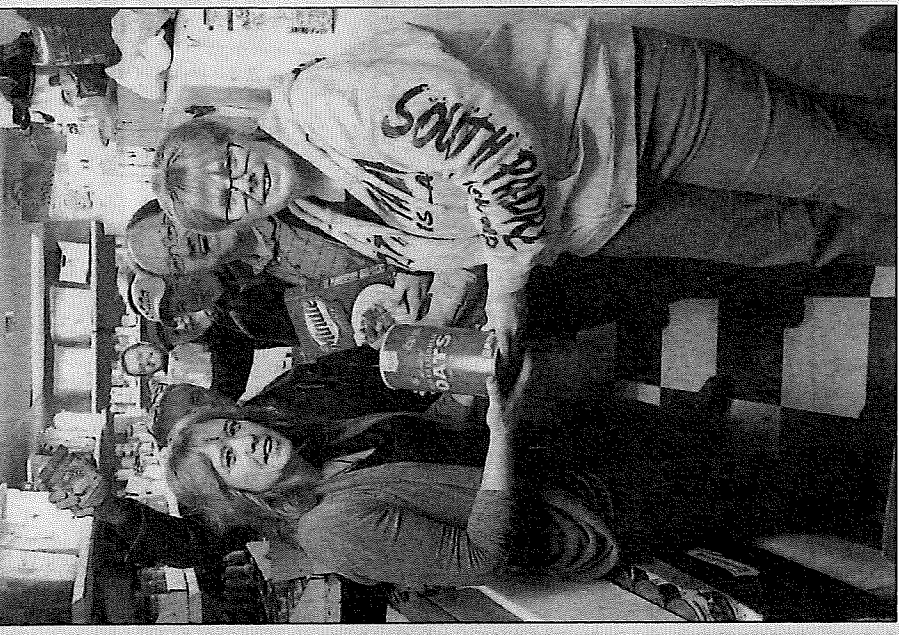


Photo by Ryan Howard

Forest Hills United Methodist Church members celebrate finishing their donation delivery to the food shelf at Community Helping Hand in Forest Lake on Dec. 4. The church donated over 2,500 items.

Forest Hills
United Methodist
Church marks
5 decades this
Sunday

Ryan Howard
News Editor

A small local parish celebrated its 50th anniversary in a big way earlier this week, when congregants dropped off more than 2,500 food shelf items at Community Helping Hand.

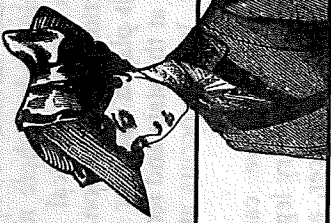
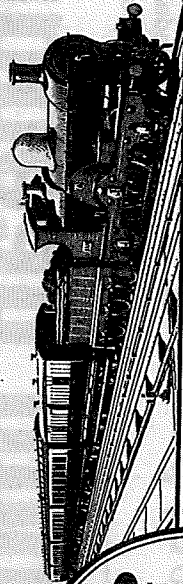
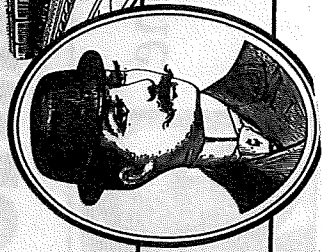
"This church is a working church, it's a serving church, [and] it's a community of people who love God, love one another and love our community," said David Werner, pastor of Forest Hills United Methodist Church.

Founded on Dec. 10, 1967 – 50 years ago to the

Forest Hills see page 4

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Minnesota Racing Commission is hosting a public hearing on live race day



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Compiled by Hannah Davis

As the food and other items came in over the last several weeks, the church piled the food on its stage as a visible sign of progress.

Forest Hills

from page 1

day from this Sunday's church service - Forest Hills United Methodist Church was a church plant of Wyoming United Methodist Church after the congregation had grown to include many parishioners who were driving from Forest Lake to attend the church. Werner, who has pastored Forest Hills for eight years, said that newcomers often joke that there are no real forests or hills near the church, which sits just off Scandia Trail at 1790 11th St. SE. The church took its name from the nearby Forest Hills Golf Course, one of the only local landmarks in that area of town when the church was founded.

"We have really seen the community grow up around our location," he said.

The church is small at about 100 members, but congregants wanted to give back to their community in a big way as a way to celebrate the church's milestone. Ultimately, they settled on a symbolic donation level of "50 of 50": identifying 50 most needed food shelf items at Community Helping Hand and collecting at least 50 of each item. The organization listed a number of common food items,

slowly-building

piles

along with some personal hygiene items like shampoo, but Werner said it was a learning experience to discover that some of the most needed items were ones not stereotypically associated with food banks - a peek into the truism that people who frequent food banks are no different in their needs or wants than anyone else.

"Things that kind of caught us unaware were things like soy milk, dried milk, Ensure, [and] things like pancake mix and syrup," he said.

The congregation ultimately collected about 2,700 items - an average of well over 20 per member - storing the

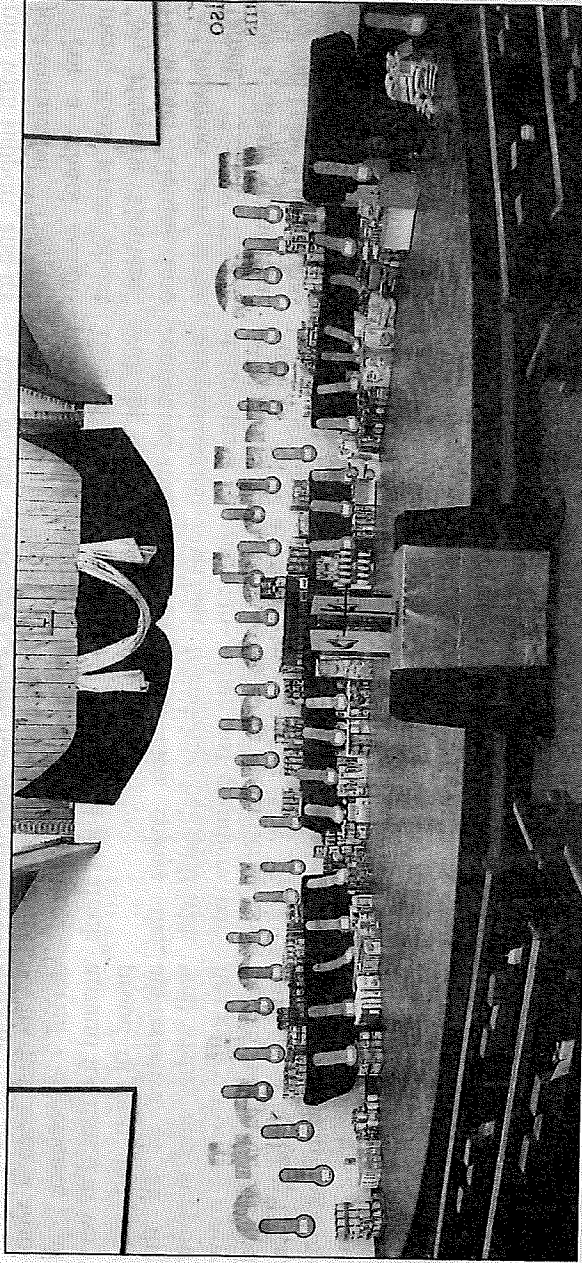
of food behind the pulpit and worship equipment over the last few weeks. On Dec. 4, several church members loaded two vans full of food and drove to Community Helping Hand to drop off all of the food. Werner said community service like this is an attempt by the church to share God's love with others.

"Our church's mission statement is to be the visible light of Jesus Christ in our communities," he said. "We are celebrating what God has done in us and through us."

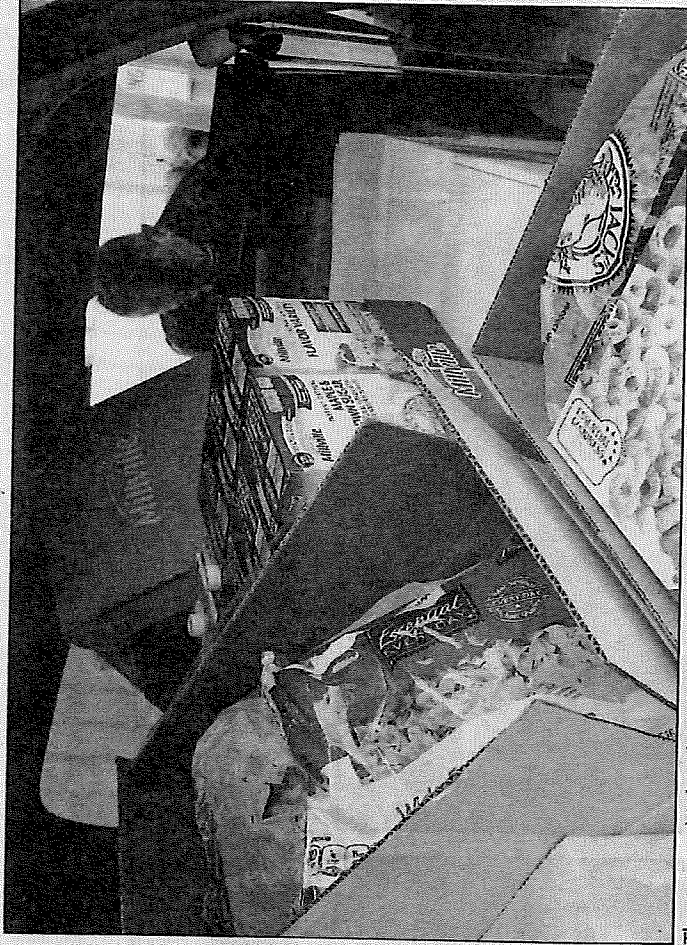
In addition to the donation, the church has also been celebrating by welcoming former Forest Hills pastors and worship ministers back in recent

Sundays to give guest sermons and lead worship. On Dec. 10, Cindy Gregorson, director of ministries for the United Methodist Conference, will speak at the service, and after the service is over, the church will host a celebratory banquet, serving foods that were popular 50 years ago. All are welcome. The service begins at 10 a.m. Werner encouraged the curious or those without a church home to come by Forest Hills and feel welcome and loved.

"We have a mix of ages and we connect together across generational lines," he said. "We're small enough where we have a personal care for each person."



Photos by Ryan Howard



The two vehicles that arrived at Community Helping Hand to deliver the goods were so stuffed that they sagged on their wheel wells.