125th Anniversary
First Lutheran

Lutheran
Witness

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First Lutheran in Knoxville celebrates 125 years of God's love

by John Schulz

First Lutheran celebrated its 125th anniversary Oct. 15-16. Dr. Wallace Schulz, associate Lutheran Hour speaker, was the anniversary banquet speaker Saturday evening and delivered the sermon Sunday morning.

Officially organized on Oct. 12, 1869, First Lutheran joined the Missouri Synod in 1897. In her 125-year history, First Lutheran has had 15 pastors, including Harry Smith (immediate past pastor) and John Schulz (pastor since 1981).

A Christian day school, initially taught by the pastor, was started shortly after the church organized. Except for five years, the day school has been in continuous operation as a major mission of the congregation. This year's enrollment is 168.

Previous anniversary celebrations included a kick-off Jan. 9 (with Pastor Harry Smith as guest preacher), followed by other special celebrations on April 17 (with Pastor Charles Baldwin, a son of the congregation in the pastoral ministry) and July 17 (with Pastor Randy Ledbetter (a former member in the pastoral ministry), each delivering the message.

First Lutheran, together with its Christian day school, continues to be active in its mission "to provide education in God's Word, a witness to Christ in the community and an outlet for sharing God's love with others."

Dr. Wallace Schulz, associate Lutheran Hour speaker, and Pastor John Schulz of First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, greet members and friends who attended the 125th anniversary celebration of First Lutheran Oct. 16.