The Grant United Methodist Church will celebrate 125 years Sunday, Sept 18 with 10 a.m. worship, followed by a catered dinner.

Rev. Harold Backus who pastored the church for several years will preach. Other former pastors planning to be present include Julian Miguel, Sharee Johnson and Sally Ruggia-Haden.

Members will be honored for 50, 60 or more years. Memorabilia and photos will be on display.

An ice cream social will also take place in the afternoon New souvenir ornaments depicting the cross and flame logo of the UMC will be available for purchase as a keepsake of the 125th celebration.

Speaker: Rev. Backus

Rev. Harold Backus is a native of West Virginia. He came to Nebraska following his college education at West Virginia Wesleyan College in 1969.

He attended Iliff School of Theology for two years while serving the Lodgepole United Methodist Church.

He was ordained Deacon in June of 1971. His next appointment was the Bayard/Melbeta Parish.

Rev. Backus then served the Asbury United Methodist Church in Lincoln while participating in the clinical pastoral education at Bryan Memorial Hospital for four quarters.

Following this training he enrolled at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City where he received his Master of Divinity degree.

Other churches Harold has served include First UMC in Fremont, First UMC in Tecumseh, the Grant UMC (also the Madrid church for a few years with Grant), five years in the West Virginia Conference, two years as Associate Minister in Christian Education in the Liberty UMC in Liberty, Mo., the First UMC in Superior, and the First UMC in Auburn.

He received his doctorate in 2005 from Saint Paul School of Theology in church administration with a special focus on a collaborative approach to rural ministry.

He was appointed by Bishop Ann Sherer as district superintendent to the Prairie Rivers District in July 2007. He and his wife Sue now live in Grand Island where he is currently the Dean of the Cabinet.

His hobbies include reading, “fixing things” (repairing old radios and other electronic devices and restoring Volkswagen beetles). Sue loves to do arts and craft projects, and crocheting.

They have two daughters, Ingrid and Trista. Trista lives in Kansas City and works as a paralegal with a large law firm. Ingrid and husband Matthew McDonald live in Millsboro, Del.

They have four children, Sam, 15, Hanna, 13, Emily, 10, and Olivia, eight. Ingrid works for Hospice.