

108 years of strawberries in Canadice

CANADICE — After 107 years you would think members of the Canadice United Methodist Church would be weary of staging their annual strawberry festival.

They aren't.

The 108th version of the festival will be held Saturday with serving from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Featured at the indoor festival is a dinner with a menu that shows ham, potato salad, baked beans, vegetable salads, homemade rolls, pickles, beverages and strawberries and cake.

The fees are \$5 for adults and \$2.50 for children; preschoolers are fed for free.

Another attraction is a bake sale featuring desserts and other baked goods.

Mrs. Marjorie Simons, County Road 37, has been a member of the church for 58 years and has been working on the annual festival since 1946.

When the festival date draws near, she journeys to Phelps to purchase 400 quarts of strawberries.

In addition to the berries that are served with cream for the dinner dessert, berries are available for purchase at the bake sale.

"We don't make any money selling them. They (customers) pay what we pay. It's just more of a service for the people attending the festival," Mrs. Simons said.

Those people attracted to the festival usually number around 400, although 20 years ago a record 500 dug into strawberries at the church.

"Between 150 and 200 come between 2 and 3 p.m. and the rest all seem to come at 5 p.m. It's like old home week. People sit around and talk and visit," she said.

Since the festival was established, only once was the event canceled. In 1917 a late frost killed the berries. Those were the days when only "local" berries were used.

Proceeds from the festival are used for various church projects. One year the church was built up and a basement installed. New carpeting and a new organ have also been purchased with the money earned.



Festival site

Photo by John Hc

The Canadice United Methodist Church will be site of 108th annual strawberry festival Saturday. Proceeds go to church projects and 19 years ago that work included building the church and installing a basement. Shown in photo are members Amy Pov Hopkins (left) and Mina Preston Johnson.