

The Granger Brethren Church Steeple

This exterior feature of the historic church is not only the focal centerpiece of the building itself, it has been a recognizable feature of the Granger community for well over a century. Through its doors have walked mayors, county commissioners, and state representatives as well as Hollywood icons Rip Torn and Sissy Spacek. More importantly, through its steeple doors have walked generations of Texas Czechs, including historically significant personages as the Rev. Aldolf Chlumsky, considered the father of the Unity of the Brethren Church here in Texas. It was at this site in Granger, in fact, that 11 delegates from the Czech communities he organized came together in 1903 and established this denomination.

The church's steeple also has both symbolic and traditional significance. The steeple's adornment of the chalice reminds the Czech Brethren of their martyred founder, the priest from Bohemia, Jan Hus, who was burned at the stake in 1415 for attempting to provide the mass in the vernacular Czech language and serve not only the bread but the chalice as well during mass. In addition, tucked away in the steeple is a document signed by the original local church fathers in Granger (including my Machu kin) who built the steeple and, upon its discovery generations later in the midst of bell repair, signed by their sons and successive generations since.

--T.W. Loessin