



By Tim Linscott

Managing Editor

A joyful noise of praise and faith arose from the pews at the Venango Community Church on Sunday, Aug. 25 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the church.

Voices from all over the world came to commemorate and celebrate this cornerstone of the community. An estimated 140 people attended the ceremonies with many coming from Lincoln, Omaha, Sidney, Chadron, Norfolk and as far away as Oregon, Michigan, and Zambia, Africa (via Torrence, Wyo.).

A special guest speaker was Jim Wechsler, Village Missions Executive Director, of Dallas, Ore. Wechsler commented in his remarks to the congregation that faith is needed everywhere, in rural and metropolitan areas and that the Venango community is strong in its faith. This faith is evident in the church remaining strong and vibrant after 125 years.

Others traveling long distances included missionaries Bob and Virginia Carpenter of Zambia, Africa, currently on leave from their duties and living in Torrence, Wyo. Former pastor in Venango Jim Mort made the trip from Petoskey, Mich., as well as Jon Hansen, Village Missions district representative and former pastors Richard Wischmeier and Gene Layne.

Current Venango Community Church pastor, Chris Costrini, explained that this event was wonderful to see how the church connects people to the community.

“This kind of response, I think, helps us understand just how the church has been able to affect people over the course of the years. If people didn’t feel connected to the church and the community, they wouldn’t have returned,” Costrini said. “If people didn’t feel as though the church was important and valuable to the community, they wouldn’t have come. We are just thankful that there have been so many faithful men and women, trusting in the grace of God, that can have that kind of response from others.”

