

Hundreds come together to celebrate 100th anniversary

Written by Holyoke Enterprise



Hundreds of people gathered at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Amherst throughout the day Sunday, April 11 to celebrate the church's 100th anniversary.

On a bright and sunny day, nearly 340 attended the morning service and just over 300 made the afternoon worship service of praise and thanks. It's been awhile since the streets of Amherst have seen the volume of people and vehicles as they did Sunday.

In all, four pastors helped conduct the two services. Current pastor Rev. Kurt Hatteberg was joined by Rev. Alan Borchert of Riverton, Utah who served the congregation from 2004-08, Rev. George Hesse of Boulder 2000-04 and Rev. John Larson of Littleton 1983-92. Pastors from Holyoke, Haxtun and Grant, Neb. were all present at the afternoon service as well.

Because of the overflow of people at both services, the basement was outfitted with a video screen so everyone could participate in the services.

Harvey McCune wowed those attending the morning service with a powerful solo titled Bless This House. Another highlight was when Rev. Hesse taught the children some sign language

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during the children's sermon and even had the congregation involved with the signing.

A 100th anniversary choir consisting of people from the Amherst, Venango, Haxtun, Holyoke and Julesburg congregations came together to perform numerous numbers.

Pam Vieselmeyer played the organ, keyboard and served as the choir director. Lois Rafert was the pianist. Lennie Rafert and Lyle Worley played trumpets and Mary Belle Rafert pitched in on the organ.

After the morning service a noon sit down meal was served at the Amherst Community Hall where about 330 people were served by the youth of the congregation.

The afternoon service was also packed with people and followed by a reception in the basement of the church.

Stories, photos and memories were on display for people to look at and discuss.

Reva Deden of Anchorage, Alaska was believed to be the person who traveled the furthest for the celebration.

Serving as the chairman of the organization committee for the 100th anniversary celebration was Jay Dean Krueger. Keith Rodeman serves as the chairman of the congregation.