



By Tim Linscott

Managing Editor

The drive and passion that motivated 12 like-minded Christians 125 years ago to found the Venango Community Church still resonates today in the parishioners of the church.

A host of speakers are lined up to talk about their memories and their faith at a special ceremony on Aug. 25 at 10:30 a.m. at the church, 112 S. Allegheny in Venango. The main speaker for the morning service will be Brian Wechsler, Village Missions executive director.

Following the service a dinner will be held with a special afternoon anniversary service following the meal. The afternoon will feature several missionaries and past ministers sharing their memories of the church and congregation.

Past ministers include Jim and Alice Mort, Gene and Julie Layne and Richard and Elaine Wischmeier. Missionaries Tim and Joy Butler, who work with Youth for Christ in Denver, will be on hand as will Paul Entz, who worked for many years in Africa and currently works in Omaha with the immigrant population.

Just as Rev. Glen Taylor led the original group in organizing the church in 1888, Rev. Chris Costrini is now leading the congregation of around 30 members in their journey through faith.

Costrini explained that there is a very faithful group of members at the church, which he has observed has likely been the case in Venango since the church was established in 1888.

“There have been folks here for generations and been faithful members since they were children,” Costrini said. “We have board members that have been active for over 50 years. We really have a group of very dedicated people here. Everyone is involved and it has been that way, I imagine, for the entire history of the church.”

The church continues to serve God and the community with men’s and women’s Bible studies, Sunday School, a youth group, KYB/Awana and supports seven missionary families.

Costrini and wife Tina have been at Venango for three years with their two children, Caleb, eight and Annie, six. He feels blessed to be a part of this momentous anniversary for the church.

“It is nice to be a part of what has all happened in the church the last few years,” Costrini said. “I am just one person in a long list of many great people who came before me helping the

church continue to thrive.”