

Methodists celebrate 125th with vision of a future with hope

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

“Visioning a Future with Hope” was the sermon message at First United Methodist Church of Holyoke Sunday, Nov. 4 as the congregation and guests celebrated the church’s 125th anniversary.

Rev. Skip Strickland, district superintendent, delivered the sermon message, emphasizing the direction of growing a future with hope.

Pastor Al Strauss welcomed the congregation, which numbered close to 150, to the Celebration Sunday. He also shared words on the celebration of 125 years of God’s service and asked members of the congregation to share, as well.



Members of the congregation at First United Methodist Church of Holyoke follow the lead of Praise Team members Mardi Stewart, Kala Yost, Nancy Kennedy and Luke Stewart during the 125th anniversary celebration. —Enterprise photo

In addition to the special service, those attending enjoyed viewing displays of history pieces from the past 125 years. Another table displayed the contents of the time capsule which was buried in 1970 and was dug up the week prior to the 125th anniversary celebration, just in time for the festivities.

A catered meal followed the worship service, and the church membership then conducted its annual charge conference with Dist. Supt. Strickland.

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Praise Team members Kala Yost, Mardi Stewart, Nancy Kennedy and Luke Stewart led the congregation in worship music throughout the morning's service.

Sharon Murray was at the organ for prelude, offertory and postlude music.

Megan Humphreys also shared her musical talent with a vocal solo, "Blessings."



Rev. Skip Strickland, District Superintendent, delivers his message "Visioning a Future with Hope" at the 125th Anniversary celebration service at First United Methodist Church of Holyoke Sunday. —Enterprise photo

Youth of the congregation had a special message from guest children's speaker "Butterfly" before heading to K.I.D.S. Church.

Scripture lessons from Isaiah 40:28-31 and Philippians 2:1-8 were read by Donna Oliver and Gary Sperber.

Gwen Triplette read the names of the members of 50 years and more, noting their combined service totalled 1,398 years.

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Dixie Fagerlin and former pastor Darrell Dennis celebrated the pastors who have served the local congregation. The names of all 48 pastors in the 125-year history were read, and letters of congratulations from several former pastors were shared, as well.



Members and guests of the First United Methodist Church of Holyoke take time to look at history pieces, as well as memorabilia from the church time capsule which was buried in 1970 and retrieved in time for the 125th anniversary celebration Sunday, Nov. 4. Celebration Sunday included a special worship service, followed by dinner. —Enterprise photo

Kevin Humphreys led the celebration of church leadership, asking people to stand if they'd taught Sunday School, served on a committee, served a dinner, participated in a Bible study, etc. By the time he was finished, a good share of the congregation was on their feet.

Pleasant stories from days gone by in the history of First United Methodist Church of Holyoke added a fine dimension to the day of celebration.

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