

## Zion Celebrates 125 Years

May 30, 2010 marked the 125<sup>th</sup> birthday of Zion Mennonite Church in Broadway, VA. On Sunday, May 23, 2010, festivities were planned for an historical homecoming celebration. With invitations extended, publicity completed and the special service designed, Zion welcomed those from near and far to worship and fellowship.

Sunday School was replaced by a worship hour with everyone gathered in the sanctuary. Jim Rush welcomed visitors and regular attendees and Welby Showalter led the opening hymn. Elwood Yoder presented a picture slide show of Zion from 1960-1980. An anniversary video, created by Clay Showalter, showed interviews of current members talking about Zion's impact on their lives.

After a short break, the second worship hour began with singing and announcements. Dorothy Hartman led the children's choir in two songs, while Patty Baer shared a "birthday party" children's story. Scripture was read by Betty Byler, whose late husband, Jesse, was lead pastor from 1961-66. Clyde Kratz, though currently on sabbatical, rejoined the congregation to deliver the morning message. A special part of the service was the recognition of Elwood Yoder, for his dedicated and industrious completion of the book, "We're Marching to Zion: A History of Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, VA, 1885-2010." Clay Showalter and Mandi Stoltzfus co-led the time of worship. Music leadership was shared by Welby Showalter and Matt Hunsberger.

The fellowship was energetic and animated as the congregation moved from the sanctuary to the fellowship hall where the noon meal awaited. Along the way, there were plenty of things to see. Elwood was available with copies of his book for purchasing and signing. A display area included items such as old Zion directories, pictures and stories written by long-time Zion members. Especially important were the conversations and memories shared with former members who came to celebrate.

After the meal, Welby Showalter took a moment to recognize Jim Rush for his outstanding organization of the day's events. Then the microphone was opened to anyone who wanted to share stories and memories from the past, with many laughs resulting! Despite the rain, a red oak tree, donated by Elwood & Joy Yoder, was planted outside by the children as a symbol of hope and new growth. A fitting way to end a celebration of devotion to our Lord.