



Illinois Free Will Baptist

September 2016

# Newsletter

## ILLINOIS WOMEN'S RETREAT:

*Welcome to... "My Country Home"*

**Friday and Saturday: September 23-24**

Registration at 5:00 -5:30 pm Supper: 6:00 pm

Saturday Brunch: 8:30 am Service: 9:00 am



\*Bring your favorite Country Décor \$25 suggested donation for speakers and expenses

\*Photo booth for friends and photos. \*Seminars, Music, Drama Team, Food and Fun.

Speakers: Kellie Penn and Heather Lee - Benediction at 11:45, Saturday

**CAMP HOPE – RURAL EWING, ILLINOIS**

Men are invited to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual REGIONAL MEN'S RETREAT at CAMP HOPE

**Thursday, Friday and Saturday: September 15-16-17**

**Speaker: Brother Chad Kivette, Pastor – 180 Church – Clarksville, TN**

Supper at 6:00 pm Thursday, Service at 7:00 pm

Friday Activities: Archery, Trapshoot, Horse shoes,

Communion, Pie Auction for Missions



The Retreat will close on Saturday morning with a "Send Off Service" at 8:30 am

All Men Are Invited To Attend - There Is No Admission Charge

## ILLINOIS CTS BOARD REPORT

Our Congratulations to the winners of Free Will Baptist from the State of Illinois at the 2016 National Youth Conference July 17-20, 2016 at Kansas City, Missouri:

<u>Placement</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Competition</u>
1st	Blue Point Bowl	Blue Point	D 0.80 Bible Bowl
3rd	Colin Waller	Blue Point	D 6.51 Individual Drama
1st	Jevan Squires	Rescue	K 0.K5 Individual Bible Memory
2nd	Payton Heater	Rescue	B 7.43 T-Shirt Design
1st	CAMO- Christ's Amb.	Ina	B 6.62 Recorded Pupperty
1st	Breana Wingo	Ina	D 7.71 Sculpted Clay
1st	Sophie Laughlin	Ina	C 8:20 Personal Experience Essay
2nd	Ina Quartet	Ina	A 2.40 Quartets
3rd	Breana Wingo	Ina	D 7:52 Photo Essay Art
3rd	Jack Ryan	Ina	B 7:80 Conceptual Art
1st	Erin Maas	Pleasant View	D 8:11 Short Article
2nd	Callah Mathena	Pleasant View	D 8:70 Devotion
2nd	Blake Hayes	Pleasant View	D 8:12 Long Article
3rd	Rachel Maas	Pleasant View	B 8:70 Devotion
2nd	Seth Ulrey	Calvary	B 7:20 Drawings
3rd	Ashten Winter	Decatur First	D 7:30 Mixed Media

### ALL OF THE YOUTH AT THE CONFERENCE ARE WINNERS!

No real changes in the New Guidelines - 2016 2018 Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition.

To view all the National Winners go to : "Verticalthree.com "

CTS State Competition at Ina FWB Church, April 28-29 2017 .

See you there!

Then, on to Louisville, KY

July 16-20, 2017

We are creating a database for Judges in the State for CTS

. Please help us. Thank you!

*Respectfully Submitted, CTS Board : Tommy Lewis, Allen Bigley, Josh Colson, Kathy Hayes, and Kelly Douglas*

## **HARMONY CHURCH – Rural West Frankfort**

The summer months are drawing to a close as our children prepare to begin another school year. I see God preparing His people for another season of growth as well. May we turn our hearts and minds fervently back to the Savior, Jesus Christ, and seek His face continually.

On July 24th, The Lesters brought our morning worship service. It was a wonderful service of praise and worship and testimonies to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! A Youth Rally was held at 7:00pm at Harmony Church on July 28th. Bro. Greg Walker brought the message and the Ezra Drama Team performed skits. There were approximately 70 that attended the rally. Thank you to all who helped out and provided food for the event! Truly a blessing to see our young people eager to worship and serve the Lord!

July 29th through July 31st Harmony hosted a revival with Bro. Jim McComas from Nashville, TN bringing the word. Bro. Jim's fiery messages were powerful and brought new insight to revival and the role we as believers play in it. Bro. Jim McComas also preached at the SCQM held at Benton FWBC on July 30th. The final night of revival was a joint service with 178 attending and a total of 8 different churches represented. What a blessing to come together under one roof to worship our Savior! Our Birthday/Anniversary meal was held directly after the service. July 31st was also our collection day for the Manna Mission in Johnston City. The Manna Mission is doing a great work in the community, please stop by and support their ministry!

August 2nd our SOS and Master's Men meetings were held. On August 4th our Master's Men group went to the Master's Men Regional Meeting at Hazel Dell FWBC. Sunday, August 7, Evangelist Bro. Jeff Jones from Hilltop FWBC in North Carolina preached during the morning worship service. His message on forgiveness and having a right relationship with Jesus Christ and each other continued to stir the revival fires within our congregation. Communion was held after the morning worship service. May we never forget the price that Jesus freely paid for our sins through His shed blood at Calvary so that we can be free. To God be the glory!

*“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” ~2 Corinthians 3:18*

**Pastor: Curtis Smith**

**Reporter: Jennifer Cook**

## **PITTSBURG CHURCH - Pittsburg**

School is back in session...so hard to believe!

Our VBS was a HUGE success. We averaged 165 kids each night who got to hear about the LOVE that Jesus has for them. It was such a fast paced, amazing week in the Father's house. All the kiddos in attendance loved the Bible lessons, crafts, games, etc. We also had a great evening at the HUB to cap the week off!

Our Back 2 School Bash was a HUGE hit with the community too! We had over 300 kids in attendance! The most important part is that over 600 people heard the Good News about Jesus!! We gave away a lot of school supplies, prizes, hair cuts, etc. There were over 50 dental exams performed by Dental Safari as well. We are so thankful that we were able to provide this ministry to those around us.

Our AWANA program is fixing to start back up shortly. The leaders have prepared their classrooms and are ready for the new year. The classes will begin on Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00pm. We will have classes for all ages, 2 years through high school. We have adult bible study classes as well. If you know someone in our area who is looking for a great program that focuses on strengthening a person's relationship with Christ, send them our way!

Construction of the new Sanctuary has begun. The parking lot is being prepared and the steel will be going up soon. The main parking lot has been shut off and the road that was constructed down the north side of the building is the new access point if you need to visit the church.

A part of our church family has been undergoing a massive battle recently with the premature birth of their twins. Ethan and Lizzie Robinson had their baby boy Koen and baby girl Karver at 24 weeks. Both babies have been making good progress. They both have had to have some surgeries and procedures but are gaining weight and are allowed to be held by mom and dad which is huge! They have a long road ahead of them and would covet your prayers. They also have an older daughter, Korrey, who has had life flipped upside down as well. Please lift them up.

**Pastor: Eddie Donelson**

**Pastor: Keith McDannel**

**Reporter: Christina Wilcox**

## **BEAR POINT CHURCH – Rural Sesser**

Congratulations to Larry and Lynn Martin on their Golden wedding anniversary. They celebrated with family and friends with a cook out held at their home on July 16.

On July 24 Kylee Edgmon shared about her E-team experience to Chicago. Also Sunday night our VBS started. The theme was Boot Camp directed by Robin Payne. We collected 83 packages of toilet paper, 195 boxes of Mac and cheese and 451 packages of Raimen noodles for our Sesser-Valier Lifeline which helps families in our community. We also collected \$180 for Love Packages. We had a high of 80 on Wednesday night. There was a good number of family and friends for our closing program on Thursday night. Afterwards we had food and fellowship.

Several from the church attended Adult Camp meeting. Heard good preaching and enjoyed the fellowship.

Shelby Payne shared with us about her mission trip to Jamaica on Sunday morning August 14.

Congratulations to Judson and Kayla Phenicie on the birth of son Jude Michael on July 25.

Shawn Mygatt will be hosting a 3D Archery Shoot at the church on Saturday, September 24 beginning at 9am. This is open to all who would like to shoot at targets like buffalo, deer and etc. Any age, any skill, bring your own equipment, compound bows or long bows only and field tips only. Any questions call Shawn Mygatt at 618-927-7442.

**Pastor: Larry Cook**

**Reporter: Linda Cook**

## **HERITAGE CHURCH - Springfield**

The hot, sultry weather of the summer has softened to the cooling temperatures of the upcoming Fall. The fairs and summer fun are over and the youth have gone back to school. God never changes for the seasons. He's there with us for all seasons and temperatures.

One of our faithful members and church trustee, Tom Green and his wife celebrated sixty years of marriage. An anniversary party to celebrate this occasion was held at Washington Park in Springfield.

Pastor Leonard joined in a Healing Prayer Service hosted by Table of Life Church in Springfield. Our youth are still busy with church events. We have such faithful young ones.

Thought for the day: "If you feel like taking something to feel better, read the Bible!"

*"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God."* – Romans 12:2

**Pastor: Marcellus Leonard**

**Reporter: Marilyn Guthrie**

## **FIRST CHURCH - BENTON**

This is the day that the Lord has made - we make a fuss over either too much rain or not enough. We are so fortunate that we live where we do. We may have flooding, but we aren't in as much danger as those in the south or along the rivers. We were very saddened with the death of Norma Helton, a long time member of our church. She had been house bound and bed ridden for many years. Send your prayers out for her husband Ed and her daughter Donna Davis and family. The Czuprynski family sustained a huge loss in a fire. A grill exploded and Robert was burned on his arm. They lost their garage with car, truck, and a motorcycle inside. Parts of the house were also damaged. Pray for them as they rebuild their home.

The quarterly was held at Benton First and there was a good attendance. Many of our members attended the Camp Meeting and enjoyed the speaker. It was a thrill to see a young fellow and his parents go to the altar on the first night. Those of us attending enjoyed the music by Larry Clyatt, Mike Thomas, Bethany Sink and Alisa Leffler. We enjoyed them so much in our church over time, so it was a treat to hear them sing together again. WAC held their yearly rummage sale to benefit missions. We were very happy to have the Portell family visit with us before they had to return to Taiwan.

We are proud to welcome into church membership Zeb Leffler, Alice Grounds, and Gene and Angela Nickelson. There are so many to pray for at this time - our government and the choice for leaders, our Missionaries, our pastors, our men in blue who serve to protect us at home, our soldiers far away from home, and our teachers as we entrust our young people to them once again. Individually we ask for prayers for Ed Simpson, Jean Warren, Dave McCoy, Tom Sanders, Elloise Sullivan, the Cooks, Alisa Leffler, and Michele Czuprynski.

**Pastor: Kent Dunford**

**Reporter: Barbara Spencer**

## **JAMIE LEE MISSIONS UPDATE - Champaign**

We have been on the road now for 6 full months. There have been several questions we get asked often and with this being a halfway point, I thought I would share updated information.

The biggest question we get asked is when and where. We are currently staying at the parsonage in Benton, IL. We are waiting on a three-bedroom apartment to open up in Champaign at Waters Edge apartments. (There is a waiting list for November or December – but could be early 2017.)

Jaden will be attending a Christian school in Johnson City. We felt with all the moving we had to do, this would be the best for him. Caleb will attend a preschool here in Benton.

The heart of our traveling will take place from the end of August all the way through the end of November. We do plan to schedule services up through March of 2017. We are currently at 33% of needed funds. Join us in praying we can raise our needed commitments by the end of November – to Him who is able to do all things!

When we get to Champaign, we hope to be able to build relationships that will enable us to launch in September 2017. We do have several prospects to help us launch, however they say you don't want to build the launch team too early or they lose interest in planting the church.

Our summer has been very busy. I had the opportunity to be the missionary at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade camp and teach at the freshman /sophomore camp, as well as be a part of VBS at Mount Vernon FWBC.

Heather, Jaden, and I represented The Bridge Church at the Free Will Baptist National Convention. It was quite an experience to see our denomination stand and applaud in support for each of the new and continuing mission works. We thoroughly enjoyed our time!

**To Him Who Is Able, Jamie and Heather Lee**

## **RESCUE CHURCH – Rural Whittington**

How proud we are of all the children that attended Camp Hope this summer. What a blessing they are to our church. They all said they had a wonderful time. Those attending were; Bailee Braddy, Samuel Harris, Hannah Leek, Gage Harmon, Trevor Beaty, Benjamin Harris, Zander Walker, Emerson Payne, Payton Heater, Lane McCollem, Hadleigh Swetz, Jaxon Payne, and Zane Harmon.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Joel and Liddy Teague were with us at Rescue Church. Joel was our guest speaker during the morning worship services and Liddy taught a Sunday School Class. On July 10<sup>th</sup>, Barry Simpson was guest speaker for both the morning and evening worship services. Both Joel and Barry brought a powerful message with them. May God continue to bless them in their ministries.

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, Brother Walter Freeman presented the Morning and Evening Worship Services at Rescue, while Pastor Bryant and his family were attending the Free Will Baptist National Convention in Kansas City. Karen Freeman, also taught a Sunday School class. Both did an awesome job. Several young people of our church were at the National Convention for the CTS Competition, and we are proud to say that two got to come home with a trophy. One being our grandson, Jevan Squires, who took First Place in Bible Memorization. The other being a very dedicated young lady to church, Payton Heater who took Second Place in T-Shirt Design. Thanks to all the children in the CTS program for your dedication to everything biblical. And you can have so much fun learning about Christ .

Several came and decorated the church and class rooms for Vacation Bible School. A lot of work went into all they did. What a GREAT JOB! Our theme for VBS this year was "CAVE QUEST". We had about 42 children who attended. Bible School ran from July 24-29, starting on Sunday night and running through Friday. Commencement was held on Friday evening with fellowship afterwards. The kids were really looking forward to Friday because they were promised a pizza party and, a pizza party they got. All you can eat pizza party! Everyone at the commencement was invited to stay and fellowship. Thanks to Matt Harmon for providing the pizza and the ladies for all the delicious desserts. And a special "Thank You" to everyone for your part in helping, whether it was small or big. We couldn't have done it without you.

Two of our ladies attended the District meeting at Ina Free Will Baptist Church. They were Jane Harmon, and Anne Sink. On Sunday evening July 31<sup>st</sup>, we went to join services with Harmony Free Will Baptist Church to listen to special speaker Jim McComis. Brother McComis' message was joyfully heard by all. Fellowship and food was enjoyed afterwards. Good Luck—Tommie Poe will be leaving August 17 for more education at St Louis University . What a joy she is and helps anytime, anywhere she is needed at the church. She will be missed a bunch on Sundays. "What an awesome God we serve."

**Pastor Bryant Harris**

**Reporter Donna Harmon**

## **BLUE POINT CHURCH – Rural Cisne**

Our Bible Bowl team of Jon Hill, Colin Waller, and Noah Barnard, coached by Suzanne Lewis and Lyn Waller won the championship at the National Youth Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Colin Waller placed third with his individual drama. Several families were able to attend the competition in support of these young men.

We have sent many kids, teenagers, and adults to Camp Hope this summer. We have had three young people get saved, one at camp and two during Vacation Bible School. Our teens have met all summer on Wednesday night at the church. We have held a couple of wedding showers. The first one was for Kendal McGrew and Ray Sacchieri, who later were married in Texas in July. Several family members from the church attended the wedding, as well as Brother Ernie and Suzanne, since Brother Ernie Lewis performed the ceremony. The other shower was for Tyler McGrew and Sadie Darnell. They will be married in Carbondale on Labor Day weekend.

Brother Ernie and Suzanne attended the East Central District meeting held at Oak Valley. We were blessed to have Joel and Lydie Teague with us on a Sunday morning. Chris and Beth Wilhite, who have several family members at our church, held a Sunday night missionary service. They will be working at a church plant in McKinney, Texas. Other guest speakers this summer have included Larry Ohms of the Calvary Church in Salem and Brian Gibson from the Hazel Dell Church in Sesser. One Sunday evening Jon Hill gave a presentation about his E-TEAM trip to France. We also received a special offering for Camp Hope's construction projects in one service.

Vanessa Anderson coordinated a benefit lunch for her parents whose home was destroyed in a fire. Several of our church members helped with and attended this dinner. Brother Ernie and Suzanne were able to attend part of the FWB Camp Meeting at Camp Hope and enjoyed hearing Jeff Jones preach.

We actively participated in the Cisne Reunion once again this year. Junior Church directors Bill and Christal Lewis coordinated a Taco-in-a-Bag stand and many of our folks worked shifts to operate it. Jon Hill served as the emcee of the pageant. Noah Hill and Rebeccah Mugrage sang several songs during the intermission. Ruth Marie Simmons crowned the new Miss Cisne, ending her year-long reign. Christal and Bill also coordinated the children's games and were aided by many helpers from the church.

Brother Ernie and Suzanne Lewis also attended the funeral of Tommy Bennett in south Georgia. Tommy is the father of Josh Bennett, home missionary to Marana, Arizona. Tommy had suffered with cancer for several months before going home on July 10th. We wish our condolences to the Bennett family.

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis**

**Reporter: Suzanne Lewis**

## **ILLINI INITIATIVE / PENN FAMILY**

It is back to school time once again. This means we look back at what took place during the summer and we look forward to the new school year ahead. This past summer was one filled with great activity. We enjoyed having our first summer intern with us Daniel Reeves. He really experienced international student ministry this summer. We enjoyed having a Free Will Baptist Church from Bristol, Virginia. They helped us take the students camping. We were able to make some great friendships this summer that will last long into the future. We were able to share many great experiences with international students. We canoed, camped, fished, tubed, played, putt-putt, and even went to a Cardinals baseball game. Daniel and I were also able to have some really good gospel conversations this summer. I led one lady in her first prayer ever as she asked to learn how to pray so she could head down the journey to becoming a Christian. With our full ministry schedule mixed in with Church Camps and the National Convention this summer has flown by. I am sure many of you would ask this same question, "Where did the summer go?"

We are getting ready for August 25<sup>th</sup>, this is the day that we will meet 100 new international students and begin the relationship building process afresh. Kellie and I ask ourselves will we be able to connect into this new group of students like the last group? There is great excitement and a little nervousness about the coming year and all the unknowns. We wonder about which new student will become our kid's favorite, which student will become like family, and which student will seek to know more about the Bible. We pray for direction and discernment as we begin this process over again.

We thank you all for your prayer support. Please pray for us this new year that we would be able to start a systematic Bible study. We love our gospel conversations, and now we want to move students into more of a teaching session that they can learn the truths of the Bible. We thank you for all of your financial support that allows us to do what we do. We need to continue to raise our monthly support by about \$3,000.00. We are grateful for the work we have been a part of this summer and we are looking forward to the work we get to do in the future. – **Tyler Penn**

## HAZEL DELL CHURCH - Rural Sesser

Greetings from all of us at Hazel Dell. Summer is winding down and many are returning to school. Brother Clyatt had a special recognition of students, teachers, administrators and staff that will be or have returned to school. Following the recognition he also had a special prayer for all of them.

Congratulations to Todd and Loryn Carpenter and big brother Cole on the birth of their newest family member. Cain Michael was born on July 12<sup>th</sup>. He is the grandson of Mark and Cynthia Hamm and Mike and Shari Carpenter. He is the great grandson of Brother Danny and Sister Sharon Sample.

We held a Kids' Camp/VBS on Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>. Special thanks to Sister Katie Phillips and Sister Diana Harrison for organizing this special time. We are thankful for all the children who attended and the adults who helped in any way to make this a success.

Brother Mike Sample spoke during the evening worship time on July 17<sup>th</sup> as Brother Larry and Sister Peggy were traveling to the National Association meeting in Kansas City, MO.

Peppy Calebs met at the church for a noon meal on July 28<sup>th</sup>.

Brother Rusty and Sister LeeAnn Miller hosted a youth get-together in their home on the evening of July 31<sup>st</sup>. There were 15 youth who attended for an evening of food, fellowship and a movie.

Our annual Hazel Dell Men's Rally was held on August 4<sup>th</sup> with approximately 112 attending. Special music was provided by The Peyton Sisters and the special speaker was Brother Jamie Lee. A great meal, fellowship and worship was enjoyed by all. Special thanks to the ladies who provided food for the meal and a special thank you to the men who did the cooking.

The monthly Men's Prayer Breakfast group met on Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>.

We praise God for His watchful care over Sister Valerie Gibson who underwent recent surgery. Valerie lives in Nashville, TN, but will be in our area for a few weeks visiting family as she recuperates.

*"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." - Proverbs 14:34*

**Interim Pastor: Larry Clyatt**

**Reporter: Diana Kirk**

## ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH – Rural Creal Springs

Average Sunday School attendance during July was 101. Camden and Dovie Doss, Cameron Hankey, Josh Loyd, Josie Tanner and Faith Treat attended 5th/6th Grade Camp. A group from our church attended a Miners baseball game on Youth Group Night. There was a concert by Jordan Feliz following the game. Wanda Karnes shared her testimony on July 10. We received an offering to assist her on a planned mission trip to Uganda later this year. Brother Josh Colson brought the morning worship message on July 17. It was a blessing to have Kasey Kemp and Allegiance with us that evening. Pastor Ivan and Diane Ryan, Larry and Karen Jones, Kenny and Janet Orr and Josh Colson attended the National Association Meeting at Kansas City. Vacation Bible School was held on July 20-22 with an Olympic theme, Go For The Gold. We received a love offering for Josh Colson. A VBS recap and fellowship was held on July 24. Hollie "Poncho" Tanner, 78, passed away on July 29. Condolences to his family. Arnold View's delegates to the South Central Meeting at Benton on July 30 were Colene Doss, Cathy Kirkpatrick, Joyce Owens and Diane Ryan. The special song service on July 31 was a blessing. Kennedy Thompson and Taylor Thompson were saved that evening. Congratulations to Jason and April Agin on the birth of Lawson Malachi Agin on August 1. Also, congrats to James and Holly Sanders on the birth of Maycee Jane Sanders on August 3. Services were dismissed for Adult Camp.

*"Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways." - Psalm 128:1*

**Pastor: Ivan Ryan**

**Reporter: Buddy Parks**



**Sunday, September 25 is "The Rest of the Family Offering"**, the only annual plea for support for these Free Will Baptist ministries: Executive Office, Board of Retirement, FWB Foundation, WNAC, National Youth Conference, Commission for Theological Integrity, Music Commission, Media Commission and the Historical Commission. Give your church the opportunity to help these ministries. You may send your offering to National Association of Free Will Baptists; P.O. Box 5002; Antioch, Tennessee 37011-5002



## Camp Hope Improvement Projects

The Camp Board has recently elected to pursue two improvement projects at the camp:

### **Bath and Shower Room Addition for the Girls Dorm**

- The existing facility is too small for our growing camp and also in need of repair.
- The additional facilities will add 6 additional toilets and showers  
As well as 8 – 10 sinks and mirrors.
- Tentative Project Budget: \$54,000.

### **Caretakers Home Remodel/Addition**

- The existing caretaker's home at the camp is becoming aged and is in need of repairs.
- The focus of this project would be to enclose the carport, add a bedroom and bath room on to the house  
And update the kitchen.
- Tentative Project Budget: \$35,000.

### **Priority and Schedule**

- The Girls Dorm would begin first, followed by the home project as funds and construction schedules allow.
- If funds are available, the board would like to begin the dorm project now at the end of the camping season and get the exterior framed in.

### **Offering date is set for September 25.**

Please send offering to: Ernie Lewis; 1176 County Road 1975 N; Cisne, Illinois 62823

## **The Executive Department has issued a complete report on the National Convention held in July in Kansas City, Missouri.**

*Because of the length of the convention report, this is just an introduction to the information covering the event. For the complete report, please contact the Free Will Baptist Executive Office: Ryan Lewis, Convention Manager: [ryan@nafwb.org](mailto:ryan@nafwb.org), and to download convention photos, go to: [nafwb.yerbyphotography.com](http://nafwb.yerbyphotography.com). For those who receive the e-Newsletter, I am attaching it to the end of the newsletter for your convenience – DGS*

When delegates gathered at the first Free Will Baptist “national convention” in 1935 they surely never imagined that 80 years later, the convention choir would be larger than the attendance at that first meeting...not to mention live-streamed services or online pre-registration.

Yet today's Free Will Baptists have more in common with those early denominational pioneers than it might seem. Despite the dramatic changes the denomination (and the world) has seen in the past eight decades, Free Will Baptists remain true to their core values and theology, preach the Word faithfully, and continue to take the gospel to those who have never heard.

The faithful example set by those early Free Will Baptists has continued down through the generations. In spite of challenges and changes, the words of this year's theme hymn echo the sentiment of Free Will Baptists through the intervening decades: “Our God will not be moved; our God will never change; our God will reign forevermore!”

Ready for Revival

This year's convention theme, “The Path to Revival,” centered around 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”...continued on Page 8

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Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists  
P.O. Box 1  
Bonnie, Illinois 62816-0001

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Bonnie, IL  
Permit Number 1

**OR CURRENT RESIDENT**

*Reporters: Please send articles for the October Newsletter to David Shores: <davids@myfreewillbaptist.org> by September 15*

*Continued from Page 7...* Convention worship kicked off with Sunday School taught by Ben Evans, deacon and Bible study teacher at Calvary Fellowship Church near St. Louis, Missouri. Wayne Miracle, pastor of New Life Fellowship in Statesboro, Georgia, preached on “The Problem Reviewed” during the Sunday morning service, explaining the historical context of the passage and preparing congregants for the rest of the week’s messages. Cory Thompson, pastor of First Church in Poteau, Oklahoma, followed on Sunday evening with “The People Responsible,” examining the phrase, my people, which are called by my name from the convention’s theme verse. On Monday evening, our own Brad Ryan, pastor of Ina Church in Illinois, preached from the phrase, humble themselves and pray, “The Prerequisite Required.” On Tuesday evening, Richard Robinson, pastor of Thayer FWB Church in Thayer, Missouri, delivered “The Prescription Recommended,” exhorting the congregation to seek the Lord’s face and repent. During the Wednesday evening missions service, Marc Nepl, church planter and pastor of Restore Church in Portsmouth, Virginia, preached on “The Promise Revealed,” inviting the congregation to embrace the healing God offers. He concluded the convention by challenging listeners to engage and disciple a rising generation of Free Will Baptist leaders.

Each service throughout the week built upon the ones before, with enthusiastic congregational singing led by the Convention Choir and Orchestra, under the guidance of Convention Music Coordinator Kevin Justice and Orchestra Director Joshua Riggs. Numerous talented individuals, families, and groups shared their voices and instruments as they joined the congregation in worship.

The 2016 convention was marked by many remarkable moments—firsts, milestones, and out-of-the-ordinary events that changed the complexion of the meeting. Perhaps most notable was a prayer rally that replaced the annual preaching conference. In keeping with the revival theme, both laypeople and ministers led prayers for everything from evangelism and ministry to national concerns, denominational leadership, and current events. Men, women, and entire families huddled in groups, and the ballroom filled with voices interceding on behalf of the denomination, pastors, missionaries, and the nation. The entire report is interesting and contains department reports, budgets, resolutions, etc.

Be sure to read it in its entirety online.

Next year the convention meets in Louisville, Kentucky.



I am attaching this report from the Executive Office which covers all the business at the National Convention for 2016

Milestone Meeting in the Midwest  
National Association of Free Will Baptists | July 17-20, 2016 | Kansas City, MO

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Convention worship kicked off with Sunday School taught by Ben Evans, deacon and Bible study teacher at Calvary Fellowship FWB Church near St. Louis, Missouri.

Wayne Miracle, pastor of New Life Fellowship in Statesboro, Georgia, preached on “The Problem Reviewed” during the Sunday morning service, explaining the historical context of the passage and preparing congregants for the rest of the week’s messages.

Cory Thompson, pastor of First FWB Church in Poteau, Oklahoma, followed on Sunday evening with “The People Responsible,” examining the phrase, my people, which are called by my name from the convention’s theme verse.

Monday evening, Brad Ryan, pastor of Ina FWB Church in Illinois, preached from the phrase, humble themselves and pray, “The Prerequisite Required.”

On Tuesday evening, Richard Robinson, pastor of Thayer FWB Church in Thayer, Missouri, delivered “The Prescription Recommended,” exhorting the congregation to seek the Lord’s face and repent.

During the Wednesday evening missions service, Marc Nepl, church planter and pastor of Restore FWB Church in Portsmouth, Virginia, preached on “The Promise Revealed,” inviting the congregation to embrace the healing God offers. He concluded the convention by challenging listeners to engage and disciple a rising generation of Free Will Baptist leaders.

Each service throughout the week built upon the ones before, with enthusiastic congregational singing led by the Convention Choir and Orchestra, under the guidance of Convention Music Coordinator Kevin Justice and Orchestra Director Joshua Riggs. Numerous talented individuals, families, and groups shared their voices and instruments as they joined the congregation in worship.

#### Meeting Moments

The 2016 convention was marked by many remarkable moments—firsts, milestones, and out-of-the-ordinary events that changed the complexion of the meeting.

Perhaps most notable was a prayer rally that replaced the annual preaching conference. In keeping with the revival theme, both laypeople and ministers led prayers for everything from evangelism and ministry to national concerns, denominational leadership, and current events. Men, women, and entire families huddled in groups, and the ballroom filled with voices interceding on behalf of the denomination, pastors, missionaries, and the nation.

Impact (annual outreach emphasis) celebrated its tenth year with three exciting events on the Saturday before the convention. Eighteen volunteers from Mississippi, Illinois, Tennessee, and Oklahoma joined members of LifePoint FWB Church at the Harvesters warehouse to sort and pack nearly 12,000 pounds of food. At Victory FWB Church (Kansas City), 30 volunteers provided food and fun activities for 150 visitors, four of whom returned to visit the church the following morning.

Central FWB Church (Grandview) sponsored a community carnival with inflatables and games. Local departments provided police cars and fire trucks, and the church honored first responders. Approximately 200 enthusiastic residents attended the fair. “It’s great that race has no boundaries in the love of Christ!” remarked Rob Stottlemire, chief of Grandview Fire Department, after watching the church interact with the community.

From practical ministry and apologetics to preparing for college and confronting cultural issues, 88 seminars and panel discussions provided something for every convention goer. North American Ministries, Welch College, WNAC, Engage Leadership Network, and the Music and Media Commissions provided the practical sessions.

In an especially poignant convention moment, North American Ministries acknowledged a record number of military chaplains attending the convention. These chaplains joined Kerry Steedley, director of chaplain support, onstage to honor recently retired chaplain David Trogdon, who received the prestigious Legion of Merit Award presented by the White House for exceptional performance. Trogdon told delegates, “I thank God, my family, and Free Will Baptists for the opportunity to go into all the world to serve and pastor those who lay down their lives for freedom.” Steedley also honored David’s wife Connie for her years of support and service to military men and women.

The Commission for Theological Integrity honored the influence of Leroy Forlines with the release of *The Promise of Arminian Theology: Essays in Honor of F. Leroy Forlines*. Matt Bracey, one of the book’s authors and editors noted, “Leroy Forlines is a man who shaped the Free Will Baptist denomination and its theology. His contributions offer hope and promise for our future. We are indebted to him and grateful for him, and we honor him with this book.”

The Media Commission worked in tandem with the Executive Office to promote Check-in for a Cause. The campaign used Facebook check-ins to provide Bibles for Kazakhstan—one for every five check-ins. Nearly 6,000 people checked in throughout the week, with 3.3 million impressions (the number of times check-ins were viewed) on Facebook. A special thanks goes to both Free Will Baptist Foundation and International Missions for their partnership in this exciting campaign.

#### Down to Business

### General Board

On Monday, July 18, the General Board heard reports from nine national agencies and four commissions as Moderator Tim York guided board members through a four-hour, 19-minute meeting. The board approved several recommendations including a 2017 denominational budget of nearly \$26 million, an Executive Committee recommendation that the 2021 convention be held July 18-21, in Memphis, Tennessee, and a change to the By-Laws to bring the annual obituary report under the responsibility of the Executive Office.

Clerk Randy Bryant read the names of 19 appointments to national committees: Credentials (5), 2017 Nominating (7), Resolutions (5), and Obituary Committee (2).

During Tuesday and Wednesday business sessions, delegates heard, discussed (sometimes at great length), and approved the following reports from national departments:

### Executive Office

Executive Secretary Keith Burden acknowledged 2015 was a year of significant change and challenges as the office continues to adjust to steadily declining, and in some cases, inadequate financial resources after a 24% drop in Together Way giving over the past decade. In addition, the evolving meeting planning industry has forced the office to rethink and retool the annual convention. Despite these financial concerns, Burden thanked faithful supporters for their generosity.

He pointed to achievements reached this year: the production of ONE Magazine, which continues to thrive, reaching 55,000 families nationwide; an update to the Treatise; the development and implementation of the Rekindle program for restoring church health; and the production of a training DVD to help churches prepare for and react to emergencies.

Burden reminded listeners, "In a world of constant change, we follow a changeless Savior and preach the eternal Word. The future of our churches and denomination rests squarely on these unalterable facts." He urged his listeners to pray for wisdom in leadership and for churches to develop a heart for giving. In closing, he honored Tim Campbell (AR) for serving four terms—12 years—on the Executive Committee.

### Free Will Baptist Foundation

Foundation Director David Brown noted a loss of more than \$150,000 in 2015 due to late-year market transactions and expenses related to the estate- assets and a \$6 million net positive in Money Management Trusts.

He cheerfully informed delegates the first half of 2016 "looks really good," with total assets up almost \$8 million, nearing \$72 million. This increase is especially impressive considering a \$1.7 million withdrawal by Welch College to fund construction of the new campus. Based on current projections, the Foundation will not only enjoy record-setting increases in 2016, but will make grants available to Free Will Baptist ministries again next year.

The department hired Tim York in early 2016 as a part-time, estate planning field representative for Kentucky and West Virginia, with an additional representative to be hired in 2017. The Foundation set up 430 new estate plans in 2015, bringing the total to 991 through the end of the year, with 280 new estate plans already established in 2016. An estimated \$13.3 million has been promised to Free Will Baptist ministries as a result, and Brown projects \$75 million in bequests established in the next ten years.

### Board of Retirement

During his report to convention delegates, first-year director John Brummitt noted this was a year of transition for the department. Following the change in leadership after director Ray Lewis retired in December 2015 (only the third director in the board's 47-year history), the department hired two new staff members: Joshua Eidson, accounting administrator, and Chris Compton, communications officer. These new team members were instrumental in re-launching the website ([boardofretirement.com](http://boardofretirement.com)), improving reporting procedures, and advancing financial education and resources.

Despite a downturn in the market during the last quarter of 2015 (resulting in a negative annual return), Brummitt reported normal growth for the board in 2015, with 57 new enrollees, \$2.6 million in contributions, and operational expenses well under budget. He urged listeners not to delay in saving for retirement, but to start immediately, because the long-term benefits outweigh the short-term sacrifices.

### North American Ministries

Director David Crowe told delegates, "North American Ministries has many exciting things to report." Fifty-three families are planting churches in 25 states (not including 42 Hispanic church plants). Crowe honored five churches for reaching self-supporting status during the past year and announced four new church plants in 2016, and four planned in 2017. He celebrated the work in Portsmouth, Virginia, where 264 attended the launch service, with an average of 100 in attendance. Crowe rejoiced that three new churches—two in Arizona and one in Tennessee—are averaging more than 200 in worship weekly.

The church revitalization program continues to expand and thrive under the direction of Jim McComas while Master's Men, under the leadership of Ken Akers, remains busy with disaster relief, outreach events, construction projects, and sports fellowship. Free Will Baptist chaplain ministry continues to be a vital outreach to military men and women. Crowe also reported that the second Power Conference, held in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, May 30-31, was well attended and well received. He announced the conference will return to Branson, Missouri, in May 2017, to explore the theme, "Founded in the Past; Faithful to the Present; Focused on the Future."

He noted significant setbacks in the department's financial report, primarily related to doubtful and devaluated accounts in the Church Extension Loan Fund (CELFF). He explained that significant steps have been taken in CELFF operations to account for these losses, with good results. Crowe thanked Free Will Baptists for their continuing generous support of the department—\$4.3 million in 2015—and thanked his staff for their "servant spirit, commitment, and excellent work."

### International Missions

Clint Morgan, director of Free Will Baptist International Missions, pointed to several important decisions made by the IM Board this year: Joel and Lydie Teague (France), Chris and Tori Sargent (Spain), and Doug and Miriam Bishop (Japan) were approved as career missionaries. Daniel Reeves

was appointed to a two-year internship in France, and the Mission formed strategic partnerships with Village of Hope Uganda and Jungle Kids for Christ (Ecuador).

Most notably, however, the board made the decision to return to a designated funding system. A general funding system was instituted in 2008 to get missionaries on the field more quickly, prevent them from being recalled due to red accounts, to avoid them being held stateside to raise funds, and to fully fund partnerships with mature fields. The decision to return to designated funding was made after analysis revealed that not only were these goals not achieved, but IM also experienced a cumulative loss of approximately \$7.6 million in donations since 2008. As a result, in 2015, IM made the difficult decision to reduce personnel and reduce field budgets drastically.

Rather than continue a system that obviously was not working, the board voted to return to designated giving. Morgan urged pastors and leaders to open their churches to missionaries, teach their people the needs of the world, model obedient giving, and pour support into missionaries and ministries they are led to support. CFO Rob Conley echoed his plea, stating: "I want to be abundantly clear...the funding method is not the issue. Our singular financial objective is to maximize missionaries' ability to share the gospel, win souls, disciple believers, and see vibrant churches growing. Free Will Baptist International Missions is not a funding system. We exist to labor with the body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission."

Morgan thanked churches for participating in the World Missions Offering (WMO) and challenged every Free Will Baptist church to participate in 2017. Through the end of June, 2016 gifts totaled \$421,159, roughly \$60,000 lower than 2015. He noted that the changes to funding affect the allocation of WMO funds. The money will now go to strategic partners—mature fields such as India, Panama, Cuba, Cote d'Ivoire, and a few like-minded organizations with which IM has a strong theological affinity and ministry focus. Remaining funds will be directed to the general fund.

He praised God for milestones reached in 2015—1,031 new converts, 1,112 baptisms, and 26 new churches—and shared five goals to reach by 2020: 1) increase cash reserves to 20%; 2) increase donor churches from 1,116 to 1,339; 3) increase the number of missionaries from 74 to 89; 4) increase international believers from 27,371 to 32,845; and 5) increase new Free Will Baptist churches from 867 to 1,040.

Morgan presented plaques to board member Tom McCullough and outgoing board Chairman Danny Williams for their years of dedicated ministry. He honored missionary Mirial Gainer for 40 years of work in Japan and presented a plaque to Carlisle Hanna, longest-tenured IM missionary, for 65 years of service to God and India.

#### Women Nationally Active for Christ

Director Elizabeth Hodges noted that 2015 was a historical year for the organization, with two regional conferences for 12- to 18-year-old girls, their mothers, and their youth leaders. Both conferences ministered to 114 girls and 95 moms and youth leaders from 11 states and 36 churches. She announced the 2016 Shine! conference to be held November 12, 2016, at Heritage FWB Church, Columbus, Ohio. Visit [wnac.org](http://wnac.org) to register.

WNAC established the International Student Scholarship in 2015 to assist foreign students studying at a Free Will Baptist college in the United States. The first scholarship was awarded to Keren Delgado, a freshman at Welch College. The Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship was awarded to four pastoral students in southern India while Wisehart Scholarships were awarded to Allison Lewis (Welch); Courtney Anderson (Randall); and Tori Jefferis (Southeastern).

WNAC members also gave \$505,200 to missions and ministry causes in 2015, along with \$44,700 to the Steward Provision Closet. They raised \$17,000 to help underwrite the cost of a national retreat for Free Will Baptist women in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, making it possible for Ivorian women to meet in a retreat center for the first time. Hodges noted that WNAC will help underwrite a Cuban national retreat in 2017, raising \$12,000 for 400 Cuban ladies. Representatives from WNAC will travel to Cuba to attend the retreat.

In closing, Hodges announced "Praising Him" as the WNAC theme for the coming year, as women turn to the Psalms for strength and encouragement.

#### Welch College

President Matt Pinson noted that Welch College celebrates 75 years of ministry in 2017. Yet the mission of the college remains unchanged: to educate leaders to serve Christ, His Church, and His world through biblical thought and life.

The college continues to receive high reviews for excellence from both outgoing students and accrediting and evaluating organizations. Pinson emphatically declared this reflects the truth "that an emphasis on community and spiritual formation need not be divorced from academic excellence." He noted that while the college continues to offer 40 programs of study, 65% of male students are ministers.

He described 2015-2016 as a "banner year" for the college, with the sale and transition of the campus, increased enrollment, and a healthy financial picture. The Building on the Legacy relocation campaign has already raised \$8 million dollars, with \$6.5 million in cash received. Pinson announced a new goal of \$14.4 million, which will allow the college to build a chapel and be debt free in five years.

He celebrated the start of a new master's degree program in 2016, the M.A. in Theology and Ministry, with students enrolled from across the country. He introduced a new book recently published by the college: *Sexuality, Gender, and the Church*. The volume is now available for purchase: [order@welch.edu](mailto:order@welch.edu).

Pinson honored two outgoing Welch College board members—Billy Hanna (GA), who served from 2001 to 2016, and Chairman Terry Pierce (MS), who served from 2002 to 2016.

#### Randall House Publications

Director Ron Hunter acknowledged a significant financial shortfall—\$322,000 in 2014 and \$455,000 in 2015—for a total loss of \$777,000. According to CFO Michael Lytle, these losses result from the cost of producing a new line of curriculum, losses from Vertical Three events, depreciation, and ordering habits of some churches. The shortfall has been addressed by sharp budget adjustments (\$600,000 in 2016) and reduction in staff.

Citing a recent LifeWay study, Hunter described the losses as a reflection of the health of the church-at-large, with only 13% of churches reporting an increase in giving since the economic recession. He cited a trend in the reduction of denominational publishing (38% fewer employees since 2000). In comparison, Randall House has only dropped by one employee during that same time frame.

What is the answer to the funding dilemma? Hunter showed how 10-20% of the churches can affect a \$150,000 to \$300,000 dollar loss when one or a combination of the following occur: not ordering summer curriculum, ordering from multiple publishers, and not ordering at-home student pieces. He reminded delegates that Randall House has five major initiatives: 1) book publishing; 2) Vertical Three Conference; 3) the D6 Conference; 4)

training; and 5) all curriculum. He warned listeners that while Randall House has taken steps to alleviate the financial strain, without the support of around while still valuing our diversity. He suggested that goal might be the health of Free Will Baptist churches. Nearly 50% of his report discussed the urgency needed for change denomination-wide and revealed a few consequences should it not occur. To read a copy of his transcript, download it at [RandallHouse.com/report2016](http://RandallHouse.com/report2016).

He celebrated the ongoing expansion of D6, from growing numbers in the U.S. to Norway, France, India, Malaysia, and the Philippines. These international conferences require little investment on the part of Randall House but have expanded the ministry's impact globally. In closing, Hunter honored outgoing board members Tim Eaton (2004-2016) and current chairman Tim Owen (2002-2016).

## Commissions

The Music Commission continues its ongoing partnership with the Executive Office to provide music for the national convention, according to Doug Little, commission chairman. During the past year, the group also explored the feasibility of a hymnbook project, offered workshops at the convention, and began work toward a website to be launched later this year. The commission is also working to identify rising musicians in churches and colleges across the denomination.

The Media Commission continues its focus of providing live streaming from the national convention, according to Travis Penn, chairman. That role expanded this year to include directors' reports from the business session. The commission is exploring the possibility of live streaming the services translated into Spanish next year. The commission has also placed a greater emphasis on outreach through social media and provided workshops at the national convention. The group also partnered with the Executive Office to promote Check-ins for a Cause, a Facebook funding program that will result in Bibles printed in the Kazakh language.

The Historical Commission noted the passing of Jack Williams, member of the commission for nearly 40 years. During his time on the board, Jack contributed to many important historical projects including The 50-Year Record, History of the Free Will Baptist State Associations, and the Free Will Baptist Heritage Series of pamphlets. In 2015-2016, the commission continued its push to develop a comprehensive Free Will Baptist digital collection by processing, scanning, and posting state and district minutes. The collection may be accessed at [FWBHistory.com](http://FWBHistory.com) or at [WelchLibrary.wordpress.com](http://WelchLibrary.wordpress.com). At its March 2016 meeting, the commission also renewed its decision to help furnish the new historical room at Welch College.

The Commission for Theological Integrity sponsored the nineteenth annual Theological Symposium, October 26-27, 2015, according to chairman Matt Pinson. The 2016 Symposium will meet October 24-25, at Welch College in Nashville, Tennessee, with the theme, "The Theological Legacy of F. Leroy. Forlines." Papers are currently being accepted for consideration. The commission presented the latest issue of Integrity: A Journal of Christian Thought, available at [FWBTheology.com](http://FWBTheology.com). This website continues to expand, with regular theological articles and regular news about commission events and resources.

In other business, delegates passed resolutions affirming biblical gender identity, reaffirming the denomination's stand against alcohol and addictive substances, and thanking the Missouri State Association for hosting the convention.

## 2016 Convention Overview

### Registration

Board members – 59  
Local church delegates – 47  
NAFWB attendees – 2,585  
Ordained deacons – 91  
Ordained ministers – 471  
State delegates – 52  
NYC – 3,186  
Total Attendees\* 4,192

\*Note: Many attendees register for both conventions.

### Live Streaming

National Association  
Total Visitors – 6,328  
Unique Visitors – 3,895

### 2017 Budgets

Executive Office - \$787,650  
FWB Foundation - \$1,273,600  
Home Missions - \$5,000,000  
International Missions - \$6,900,000  
Retirement - \$568,900  
Randall House - \$4,797,500  
Welch College – \$6,278,713  
WNAC - \$266,000  
Theological Commission - \$8,100  
Historical Commission - \$5,045  
Media Commission - \$5,200  
Music Commission - \$4,775  
Total – \$25,895,483

### Speakers

Sunday Morning, July 19

Sunday School: Ben Evans (MO)

Sunday Morning, July 19  
Wayne Miracle (GA)

Sunday Evening, July 19  
Cory Thompson (OK)

Monday Evening, July 20  
Brad Ryan (IL)

Tuesday Evening, July 21  
Richard Robinson (MO)

Wednesday Evening, July 22  
Marc Neppl (VA)

Elected in 2016  
Welch College - 2022  
Michael Armstrong (OH)  
Brad Ryan (IL)  
Wayne Miracle (GA)

International Missions - 2022  
Cameron Lane (AR)  
Will Harmon (AR)  
Rodney Yerby (AL)

Randall House - 2022  
Darin Gibbs (NC)  
Timothy York (NY)  
Jay Baines (VA)

WNAC - 2022  
Pam Hackett (SC)  
Jonda Patton (KY)  
Lee Ann Wilfong (MO)

Theological Commission 2021  
W. Jackson Watts (MO)

Historical Commission  
2017 – Willie Martin (GA)  
2021 – Jeff Cockrell (TN)

Music Commission 2021  
Donnie Burke (CO)

Media Commission 2021  
Daniel Edwards (IN)

Executive Committee - 2019  
David Taylor (AR)  
Danny Williams (AL)  
David Shores (IL)

General Officers  
Moderator: Tim York (TN)  
Assistant Moderator: William Smith (GA)  
Clerk: Randy Bryant (FL)  
Assistant Clerk: Ernie Lewis (IL)

The following boards did not elect members in 2016: Home Missions, Board of Retirement, and Free Will Baptist Foundation.

Convention Coverage Team  
General editor: Eric Thomsen  
Copy editor and staff writer: Emily Faison  
Worship: Deborah St. Lawrence

Exhibits: Sara Poston  
NYC: Brandon Roysden  
WNAC: Phyllis York  
Photographer: Rodney Yerby  
Download photos: [nafwb.yerbyphotography.com](http://nafwb.yerbyphotography.com)