

Illinois Free Will Baptist February 2016 Newsletter

ILLINOIS STATE ASSOCIATION of FREE WILL BAPTISTS
MARCH 17-18-19, 2016
CALVARY CHURCH in SALEM, ILLINOIS
THEME: "Ministering With Purpose" - Philippians 1:19-21

-PROGRAM-

Thursday Evening Seminar by Brother Curt Gwartney: "Transitioning Youth to Active Ministry"

Friday Morning Speaker: Brother Jamie Lee – Host Pastor

Friday Evening Speaker: Brother Curtis Smith, Pastor of Harmony Church

Saturday Morning Speaker: Brother Josh Colson, Ministerial Student at Welch College

Hotel Information: Super 8 Motel: Double bed 63.20 + tax Single bed 67.20 + tax
The rate is under Illinois State Association meeting at Calvary Free Will Baptist Church.
It will be first come first serve basis. There are no rooms reserved just the rate is reserved
If you have any questions, contact Host Pastor Jamie Lee: 618-204-0294.

PLEASANT VIEW CHURCH – Rural Walnut Hill

Hello, and Happy New Year 2016! The Lord blessed us with good holiday celebrations at the end of 2015. We began the season with an annual Thanksgiving meal with our church family at Calvary FWB in Salem. Soon after was the start of Advent season. Once again we looked for Christ's coming through additional scripture reading and songs each Sunday until Christmas. This year the church presented a revised "A Christmas Carol" as the program on Sunday Dec. 20th. One revision was a nativity scene added to the play, complete with live lambs. We also enjoyed breakfast at church that morning before services. Finally, a group went Christmas caroling to the homes of some elder members of our church family. Many from our congregation traveled or had family members traveling during the holidays. We are thankful for God's protection and provision during this time.

In January, Pastor David and Susan Burgess attended the district meeting in Decatur. Also, the Women Active for Christ met for Bible study and prayer at Patty Simpson's home.

Pastor: David Burgess

Reporter: Holly Hayes

BROTHER JAMIE LEE and Family: Missionary Appointees to Champaign/Urbana



The Free Will Baptist North American Ministries Board of Directors approved and commissioned several new church planters recently.

Jamie and Heather Lee are joint project church planters with the state of Illinois. Jamie is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University and comes to North American Ministries after concluding a successful pastorate at Calvary Free Will Baptist Church in Salem, Illinois. The Lees will be planting a church in the Champaign/Urbana Illinois area near the University of Illinois with its 44,000 students. The Northern part of Champaign is a highly populated and high traffic area with no churches nearby. Please pray for Jamie and Heather and their three small children as they lead this exciting new project.

To schedule a service with Brother Lee in your church, contact him at 618-204-0294.

FIRST CHURCH – Mount Vernon

The WNAC met January 4th and had a meal prepared by Jackie Kennedy and Barbara Smith. In Sister Pat Shores' absence Jackie Kennedy did a devotion. In the business meeting we discussed our annual, "Souper Bowl" fundraiser, which will be February 7th.

Brother David and Sister Pat was gone a week to visit with their son, Brother Mark Shores and family in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Albuquerque might ban them from coming out there. It snows every time they go!!

Brother Phillip Kennedy filled in for Brother David while he was gone and he and Jamie Lee attended the Quarterly meeting in Decatur January 9th.

January 12th was the service at Green Tree Assisted Living services led by Herb and Margaret Eyre.

Our congregation has been invited to attend evening services at Camp Ground Baptist Church January 24th. They have designed their sanctuary after ours and they want us to see it.

"Living Proof Quartet" ministered to us in music on January 17th during the 10:30 a.m. service.

Wishing everyone a wonderful 2016. - *"God's grip doesn't slip!!"*

Pastor: David Shores

Youth Minister: Phillip Kennedy

Reporter: Donnie Shurtz

BEAR POINT CHURCH – Rural Sesser

Happy Valentine's Day! May God's love brighten your day!

On December 17 the auditorium Sunday school class met at noon in the fellowship hall for their Christmas party. All enjoyed a good time of fellowship.

The Pastor's class met on December 19 for their Christmas party. They ate, had a gag gift exchange and then went caroling to some of our older members. Everyone had a good time and for some it was their first time to ever go caroling.

Our Christmas program was held on Sunday night December 20. Our youth did a fantastic job reciting pieces and sharing the meaning of Christmas in a play. Shawn Mygatt and Sean Payne shared their rendition of the "Twelve Days of Christmas" in a skit. They did a good job and it was very funny and entertaining.

On Wednesday night, December 23 we met and went caroling to some more of our older members. It was good to share some Christmas cheer.

On December 31 we met at 6pm for a time of prayer, thanking God for all the blessings of 2015 and asking His blessings on our church and community in 2016. Praying God would use our people to further His Kingdom in the new year and that our church would be a shining light in our community.

Our youth are doing a great job conducting our services the second Sunday of each month.

Brother Larry has started a new study "Believe" on Sunday night.

Praying for the families of Clara Brown, her daughter Joyce Gunter passed away on December 25 and Annette Branche, her brother Donald Mays passed away on January 9.

Pastor: Larry Cook

Associate Pastor: Judson Phenicie

Reporter: Linda Cook

HAZEL DELL CHURCH – Rural Sesser

Greetings from those of us here at Hazel Dell! We wish you well in this new year!

The Men's Prayer Breakfast group met on January 3rd. for their monthly meeting.

We extend our sympathies to those of our church who have recently lost a loved one. Bro. Brian Gunter & family recently lost his mother, Joyce Gunter. Sister Sandy Tennyson and Sister Pat Sample recently lost their mother/grandmother. Eddie Roberts recently passed away, also. Please remember these families in your prayers as they grieve the loss of loved ones.

Our children did an excellent job of presenting the Christmas story during their program. We appreciate Sister LeAnn Miller, Sister Pat Sample, and Brother Rusty Miller for directing this year's program. Also, thank you to anyone who contributed in any way. It was a blessing to all of us.

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." - I Corinthians 15:57

Pastor: Eric Drake

Reporter: Diana Kirk

PITTSBURG CHURCH - Pittsburg

We are moving right along with this year...its February! Hope the Holy Spirit is filling your heart this year to overflowing with joy, peace, and love. These are the attributes of living the abundant life, which we all crave!

Coming up in just a couple of weeks we have our Sweet Heart Banquet and Sweet Tooth Auction scheduled. It will be on Sunday, February 14th after morning service. This is a really good time to fellowship and always has a little friendly competition for the sweet treats that are in the auction. The guys of the church take care of the meal and the Women's Group hosts the auction. The proceeds all go to missions. Who says you can't have a good time at church!

The very next day on Monday, February 15th, the 2016 Israel 10 day Trip will begin for a group of holy land travelers. An experience that will leave all of them changed forever! The group will be traveling with a few other people from Morristown, TN. Our Pastor Eddie, along with Dr. Dean Haun from Morristown First Baptist will be leading the tour. A boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, quiet time in the Garden of Gethsemane, a peek into the hewn out tomb that couldn't contain our Savior's body, are just a few of the life changing places they will see with their very own eyes! Pray for safe travels and to never be the same again!

A common theme throughout the history of our church is growth. God is blessing our church with continual growth and as a result we are considering building again. We as a church have been going before God for a few months about the direction He wants us to go. Our Sunday morning services have been very full for a long time, making it difficult to find seating for everyone attending. We want all of those walking through the doors to feel they have a place in God's Sanctuary. Please pray we would be open to His leading and not following our own plans and agenda.

"Honor the King in 2016!"

Pastor: Eddie Donelson

Pastor: Keith McDannel

Reporter: Christina Wilcox

BLUE POINT CHURCH – Rural Cisne

Bill and Christal Lewis directed our annual Junior Church Christmas Program entitled "The Not-So-Silent Night". The children did a wonderful job. We had a full house for our candlelight service around Christmas with lots of wonderful music, readings, and a devotion.

Josh Bennett, church planter at The Springs Church in Marana, Arizona, was able to speak for us on a Sunday morning in December as he and his wife, Ashley, and family were spending several days at the pastor's home over Christmas.

On New Year's Eve several gathered at the church to bring in the new year together. The teens stayed throughout the night enjoying a lock-in.

With the addition of our new building we are beginning to offer "5th Quarters" after home high school basketball games. The high school kids come to the church for pizza, chips, desserts, and drinks. Then they use the gym for playing various games. We are praying this will have a positive spiritual influence on the teens in our area.

Brother Ernie and Mark King traveled to the East Central District meeting in Decatur. Brother Mark then returned to the Cisne area so he could speak at Blue Point on the following Sunday morning.

Pastor: Ernie Lewis

Reporter: Suzanne Lewis

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH – Rural Creal Springs

Average Sunday School attendance during December 101. The average for 2015 was 85. The December morning worship average was 163. Our Children's Christmas Program was held on December 13. The Children's Church presented "Celebrate the Gift of Jesus". The Junior Church presented "The First Leon". The black light presentation "It's About The Cross" was outstanding. We enjoyed our Christmas Cantata called "Silent, Holy Night" on December 20. Brother Brad Ryan shared a Christmas story entitled "That's My Boy" that evening. Our Candlelight Communion Service was held on December 27. Christian Skate Night was held on January 4 at Emery Brothers in Marion. Don Newcom, 76, passed away on December 14. David Beyers, 73, passed away on December 25. Dale Warner, 92, passed away on January 1. Condolences to these families.

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." - 1 John 4:16

Pastor: Ivan Ryan

Reporter: Buddy Parks

HARMONY CHURCH – Rural West Frankfort

We at Harmony wish everyone a very Happy New Year and pray that it will be peaceful, prosperous and most of all one filled with the love of God for all of you.

Harmony welcomed the new year in with a New Year's watch with preaching from brothers Greg Walker, Josh Colson and Dink Phelps and Mark King bringing news from Tibet. We want to thank all who came to be with us as well as those who participated in the service. We all met at the altar to bring the New Year in with prayer.

On October 25th, Harmony had a PINK OUT Sunday for Cancer Awareness. Our Fall Revival started on the 25th with Brother Curtis and Brother Dink Phelps preaching. The Sisters of Strength collected all types of canned goods for the Promise Mission in Marion.

Sisters of Strength met in November to make fruit baskets to be taken to those who are sick and also others who cannot make it out. Sister Geneva Walker prepared Love Bundles for kids in Haiti. We thank her for this mission. The "Peyton Sisters" were with us during the morning service of Nov. 22nd. What terrific voices these 2 young girls had and what a blessing.

Sisters of Strength met on December 1st for their Christmas party and to reveal their secret sisters. The Youth Christmas play "It all Happened In the Country" was held on December 12 and 13th. The Adult program was held in the evening of the 13th. We thank Sister Emilee Smith for directing the children and Brother Cody Alstat for directing the adult program.

The Victory Boys were with us during the morning worship service on the 27th of December.

We welcome Sister Phyllis Schultz to our church family. We extend our condolences to the Clayton family as Sister Elnora Clayton, 96 went to be with her Lord on the 23rd of November. Sister Elnora was a long time faithful member of Harmony and she will be missed by us all. Jim Marrs, brother of Dave Marrs and Eugene Ramsey, father of Sherri Thompson also passed away. Our condolences and prayers are with these 2 families also. We still have many that need our prayers.

We have had a great 2015 and are looking forward to 2016 to see what the Lord has in store for us. Already things are busy here at Harmony. Come on down and get a blessing.

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." – I Thessalonians 4:16

Pastor: Curtis Smith

Reporter: Alice Barron

FIRST CHURCH - Benton.

I love to look at the simple decorations of Christmas such as fill our church right now. I love the twinkling of lights that remind me of stars, the red leaves of the poinsettias that I feel represent the blood of Christ and the green of the cedar tree that reminds of everlasting life.

Ray and Marci MacDonald took 60 Operation Christmas Child Boxes that were filled by Children's Church to West Frankfort to be picked up. Already they are setting aside items for 2016.

PTL that Gary Simpson has been able to attend church and we pray for his continued healing. Nancy Ellenwood and Harold Combs are both healing after their surgeries.

Pastor Larry and Sister Peggy Clyatt were able to visit for a few days to attend the Madrigal performance. Their grandson Zeb Leffler, also son of Marty and Alisa Leffler, was part of the musical group.

On December 13, the WNAC hosted an open house at the parsonage and it was well attended. It was decorated for Christmas and there were plenty of refreshments. The Master's Men hosted their annual Chili supper on December 15. All men of the church are invited to attend their meetings.

December 20 was very special with the Christmas music, led by Alisa Leffer, the Christmas Card Exchange and the giving of treats in the morning. A candlelight and communion service was held that evening.

Pastor Kent and Mrs. Tedra are visited her son in Nevada for Christmas.

Even at this time of the year, there is a big need for prayers. Please remember Wayne Samuels, the Gostowskis, the Cooks, Doris Carr (hip surgery) and Curtis Smith, Ewing basketball coach. There many out there who have problems and just ask God to take care of them because he knows who they are. May you all be blessed this holy season and in the New Year!

Pastor: Kent Dunford

Reporter: Barbara Spencer

HERITAGE CHURCH – Springfield

The second month of the New Year is with us already! January was filled with many activities for the congregation and our youth.

How many of us are keeping our resolutions made in earnest on January 1st? Remember, resolutions to lose weight, go to the gym, work out on the stationary bike, save money by giving up those Starbuck lattes? Why not make different ones that we can handle. Pray every day or more, go to church when they have services, pay more than your tithe or volunteer to clean the church? These resolves may be easier to keep.

Heritage is working in earnest to pay down our mortgage by July, 2016. Congregants are encouraged to set aside money specifically to pay this debt.

Sundays are filled with Christian praise and worship at Heritage. Tom Hay salutes the Lord with his horn, Taste and See raises the rooftop with their talents. The children are picked up in the van and join with their peers to discover what God has in His plan for them.

Jesus gave His all, not His almost.

“He who does not love, does not know God, for God is love.” – I John 4:8

Pastor: Marcellus Leonard

Reporter: Marilyn Guthrie



Welch College invites you to attend the annual Illinois “Ignite The Flame” dinner. The dinner provides a time of fellowship, food, fact and fundraising.

Saturday, February 21st at 6:00 pm, at the Bear Point Free Will Baptist Church in Sesser

You will be receiving information in the mail in the next few days.

BROTHER ALTON LOVELESS SEEKING HELP

Brother Alton Loveless has compiled lists of people who played a part in the history of Illinois Free Will Baptists and has published several books on the individuals he has researched. Now he is trying to find people who remember the lady preachers who once served in our state. He has several names already listed, but would like to get a complete list, and the readers of this Newsletter are probably the key to acquiring those names.

He would like to get names, birthdates, etc., but he is mainly interested in the time of death and the place of burial. If you have any information you can share, please contact him at <alton.loveless@prodigy.net>

YOUTH and MISSIONS

We have several young people planning mission trips this summer. This list may need some updates which will be included in next month's Newsletter. Send updates and corrections to me as soon as possible. The information I have includes: **E-Team** – Jon Hill, Gabby Boomer, Ben Barcroft, Garrett Gibbs, McQuire Portell and Isaiah Penn. **CMP** (College Missions Program) – Esther Smith and Emily Petty. **ELIC** – Dalton Alvis. We will try to list their churches and how they may be contacted for services at your church. Please pray for each of these as they plan and prepare for service.

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Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists
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FREE WILL BPTIST FAMILY MINISTRIES

This is an edited version of the letter received from Family Ministries

Truly God has been so good to **Free Will Baptist Family Ministries**. As we reflect upon this past year and move forward into 2016, I can only say what an awesome God we serve. I thought you would enjoy seeing some statistics and current happenings under the umbrella of programs provided at our ministry. You can rejoice with us that in the past year:

1. 106 young people made a decision for Christ and 21 followed Him in baptism. If anything should get Christians excited, it should be hearing about others being saved, especially when your support helped make it possible! And for the last 16 years now, we have seen an average of 100 or more saved through this ministry.

2. We served 463 youth in our residential group care in TN & AR, 104 in Foster Care, and hosted 3,345 guests at The Oaks, our retreat center.

3. 97 babies born to the moms benefiting from The Hope Center in 2015, and currently serving 471 through our crisis pregnancy resource center. If it were not for your support of Family Ministries, many of those babies would have become another number in the abortion statistics.

4. 107 young people graduated from our Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Program.

5. We expanded our services into Charleston, AR, through a donation of a 15,000 sq. ft. building. On Dec. 1, 2015, we celebrated with the ribbon cutting and dedication of the newly renovated facility, "**Maggie House**". By the end of January of this year, we will have **20 youth in care**, with capacity of 33 children.

6. We are currently serving 50 residents at Governor's Bend, in Erwin, TN and 45 at The Laurels, in Wise, VA, our assisted living facilities.

For more information about how you can be involved with this great ministry, contact us at: 90 Stanley Lane Greeneville, TN 37743 PHONE: 423.639.9449 E-MAIL: info@fwbfm.com WEBSITE: www.fwbfm.com

We also have field representatives available to come and share about Family Ministries with your church. Log on to our website for a list and contact info for our reps.

