



Illinois Free Will Baptist January 2016

# Newsletter

## RESCUE CHURCH – Rural Whittington

Hello from Rescue Church! It is time to be very thankful for all the blessings we received in 2015. We are now leaving those things and begin to do God's work in 2016. Remember, God didn't promise days without pain, laughter without sorrow, nor sun without rain – but He did promise strength for the day, comfort for the tears, and light for the way. Happy New Year! "What an awesome God we serve."

**Pastor Bryant Harris**

**Reporter: Donna Harmon**

## BETHEL CHURCH – South Roxana

First off, we would like to thank Daniel Renfro for filling in as interim pastor while we look for a new pastor. He has been with us since Pastor Ricky and his family left back in August. We are very grateful to God for bringing Daniel to us in a time of need. His sermons have been both challenging and encouraging. Please pray for us as we continue the search for a new pastor, as well as for a new school principal. Our current principal, RaNell Consiglio is planning to retire; we are very thankful for all of her hard work.

A very important issue that Daniel has preached on recently is that of giving. Seeing as how God has blessed us with so much, it's important that we give towards the needs of others. We were very happy to get a few opportunities to do just that these past few months. In November, we collected \$1184 towards the purchase of Military Bible Sticks for those serving our country. Also in November, we were able to send over 150 Shoeboxes to kids in need through Samaritan's Purse. Then there was our Christmas Dinner and Auction on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Through this annual event, we were able to collect over \$2300 to go towards reaching the needs of the people in our local community. We thank God for opportunities like these and pray for many more in the future. - **Reporter: Chad Mishler**

## BLUE POINT CHURCH – Rural Cisne

We have started a new program for youth known as S.W.A.G.: Serving and Worshiping an Awesome God. On Wednesday nights a meal is served to all the young people and then they break up into various classes according to age. Recently the teenagers completed a service project. They helped unload and sort a shipment of food that arrived at a local pantry. Several of the teens went back on that Saturday to help distribute the food and supplies to families. Richard Brown of the Oak Valley Church is the coordinator of this pantry and worked out the details in enabling our youth to serve.

A few of us traveled to West Frankfort to see the Lady Flames defeat Morthland College. It was good to see so many Free Will Baptists there to support the girls and Welch College. The Kingdom Builders Sunday school class enjoyed their annual Christmas lunch at Anthony's in Flora. Joel and Lydie and their two girls were our special guests as they had arrived from France that week.

Our new building which includes a gym, several classrooms, new bathrooms, and a huge kitchen is completed. We held the ribbon cutting ceremony on Sunday, December 13th with a huge crowd attending. The building was dedicated to the glory of God and all praise for the project was given to Him. After the service a celebration meal was enjoyed by all.

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis**

**Reporter: Suzanne Lewis**

## ILLINI INITIATIVE - University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana

Another semester has come and gone here at the University of Illinois. We have had a very busy and rewarding several months to close out the year 2015. I will list some of the highlights.

First we had a very successful semester at the English Corner. We have averaged around 40 students consistently for our large group meetings. This has been one of our best groups of students yet. I am the conversation group coordinator for the English Corner and this semester we were able to help over 130 international students with their English through a dozen small conversation groups.

Second it has been a great semester for gospel conversations with unbelieving students. We have been able to share elements of the Gospel with dozens of students whether that was through the Thanksgiving dinner, the Christmas play, or the Christmas large group meeting. There are over a dozen students that I have been able to sit down with and have a very clear conversation about Jesus. Most of these students have no idea the truth about Jesus, the Bible or the Christian faith.

Third highlight of the semester would have to be my conversation groups. I have one conversation group that turned into a bible study with a girl from Korea. She is really seeking the truth of the Christian faith. My other conversation group on "Big Questions of Life" has led to great comparisons of Jesus vs. other belief systems. This group also allows me to understand these students better. Many of them come with struggles. One listed her big question of life as, "what is love?". Her reason for this was due to the fact that her parents had divorced and she wasn't for sure if her dad loved her. One of my favorite songs is "People Need the Lord" and I see it so clearly on a daily basis.

I will wrap things up with some family highlights. Madden started kindergarten and is really liking school. He makes friends with ease. Mason started learning the Cello and had his first concert. Millie is taking gymnastics but her highlight is that her best friend moved into our neighborhood. Kellie and I have endured being without a kitchen from September 27<sup>th</sup> to December 11<sup>th</sup>. It has been a struggle but she now has an updated kitchen that was not planned due to a major water leak.

Finally I have really enjoyed being able to travel around to our Free Will Baptist churches and share about the opportunity we have to reach the nations through international students. I have received positive reactions to our ministry whether I've been in Alabama, Ohio, Tennessee, or Indiana. We are super thankful for the people who give of their own resources to enable us to have these highlights, and enable us to plant the gospel into the hearts of others. -Tyler Penn

## PITTSBURG CHURCH - Pittsburg

January 2016.....enough said!! It is said that as you get older, time speeds up. We must be in light speed! All creation appears to know we are on a crash course with a specific time set by God Himself and seems to be making preparations for those last days. Prophecy being fulfilled before our very eyes! Look up church...your Redemption draweth nigh!

December was surely a busy month around PFWBC and it's families as was your church's, as well, I'm sure. Everyone spending extra time with family and friends, preparing for Christmas celebrations, and lots of opportunities to be in God's house with God's people makes the month fly by ever so quickly. Our Women's Christmas party was held on December 7<sup>th</sup> at the church and the ladies in attendance had a great time! They did a Christmas sock exchange filled with goodies. Each person bought a pair of socks, filled one with goodies, brought both to the party, and chose one of the extra socks off a table, then picked the filled match as their gift. It was something new and exciting and went over very well! Allegiance made a stop in on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> during our evening service on their Christmas 2015 tour! As always they did an amazing job at leading us in worship! Our AWANA program's Christmas pizza party was on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. The kids always enjoy getting to fill up on pizza, cookies, watching a movie, and spending time with their fellow clubbers.

At the time of this writing we still have our Children's Christmas Program coming up in a few short days. All the children's programs at PFWBC will have a part to play, all the way from our Nursery through Omega Children's Church (5<sup>th</sup> grade). It will surely be a fun night of hearing the Truth about Christmas through a child's eyes. We are also gearing up for our annual Christmas Eve Lunch where we open the doors up to the public to come and enjoy a hot, home cooked meal during the holiday season. We are looking forward to being the light this Christmas season to our community.

January is usually one of the slower months of the year for us, and we are looking forward to the slow down!

*Welcome to 2016 from the PFWBC Family!*

**Pastor: Eddie Donelson**

**Pastor: Keith McDannel**

**Recorder: Christina Wilcox**

## CAMP HOPE – Rural Ewing

Greetings to you from the wilderness of Camp Hope. I am excited about what God has done with and through Camp over the last year. I want to say thanks for all you have done to support your camp. We can not do the ministry that God has ordained us to do without your partnership and support. Next June I will have been at the camp six years and what a ride it has been. God's ministry is good. I arrived as the finishing touches on the New Chapel were being done and let me applaud you on a wonderful building set aside for the worship of our Lord and Savior. As my ministry started the first year was a struggle arriving the day before leadership camp started and trying to get my head and feet on the ground. I wish I could tell you we had an easy and smooth transition but that is a story for another day and time. Then I feel like we picked up the ball and things started to move in a wonderful direction. The people of Illinois come together and support this camp with their heart, prayers, and monies. **THANK YOU!**

We have tried hard over the past years to add and improve the camp while still keeping up with maintaining what God had given us. Again I wish I could tell you it's been done perfectly and without any problems, but this would not be the facts. Which brings me to some of the improvements and thanks be to God for all of you and what He is doing. Thanks to the board for having a vision, letting me have a vision and moving to reach our goals. Without you at the helm to lead us the camp would not be improving at the pace it has.

Also to all those who have worked at the camp: You give of your time often taking a week of vacation to come work with young people and you are invaluable to me and the camp.

Then you have those who upon my request take some of my vision for the camp and run with it. The fire pit by the chapel (Rescue FWB Men's group), The granite sign in front of the fire pit (brother Tom from the Heritage Church) The Gazebo and the Pavilion (The Malone Family), The Pond (The Burkholder family, Mark Lappin, Tom Harmon, Fran Lentz, and many others) The Fish in the Pond (Rescue Masters Men) The remodel of the gym bathrooms (Tom Harmon and others) The Bow range (Tim Pierce) To my church Ina FWB Church for allowing me to minister at the camp and the church. There has also been a number of people who have donated things to the camp and wish to not have their names mentioned. Thanks be to God for each and every one of you and the work for the kingdom.

I have some news for you, we are in the process of discussing what steps the camp will take next in the improvement process. There has been a plan in the works to build a shower house on the end of the Girl's Dorm. Not a lot of the specifics have been decided. One thing is for sure, we will be needing support to enable us to do this. As the board is meeting and planning we will be giving more details. I hope that you will be in prayer for us as we try to be wise with what God has given us. I also hope you will consider partnering with us financially. This project like so many at the camp will be relying on your partnering with us and you have always been faithful, for this, great things have been accomplished. May God receive all the Glory and praise. - **Reporting, in His Service. JasonJanus**

## HERITAGE CHURCH – Springfield

The New Year has arrived with renewed hope and experiences for Heritage's place in Springfield, and prayers for Christians everywhere that are being persecuted for their faith.

Many events happened in December culminating in the New Year.

December 17th – "Taste and See" (Marcellus, John Crisp and Paula Irby) gave a concert at Centennial Point, a senior facility in Springfield.

Sunday, December 20th, after Morning Worship, our youth held their party in the educational building.

Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 7:00 pm, The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service was held.

Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, New Year's Prayer Meeting/ Bible Study hailed in the New Year.

God is the Glory and Power in a bleak and dismal world.

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,  
that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" – John3:16*

**Pastor: Marcellus Leonard**

**Reporter: Marilyn Guthrie**

**PASTOR NEEDED:** The Pleasant Grove Free Will Baptist Church in Anderson, Missouri is seeking a bivocational pastor to lead their congregation. They are unable to pay a full time salary, but they will provide housing. Interested parties may contact Mr. David Bowers by telephone at 417-845-6805 or you may send a resume to:

Pleasant Grove FWB Church c/o David Bowers 71 Stogdon Hollow Road Anderson, Missouri 64831

## **FIRST CHURCH - Johnston City**

Merry Christmas! The holidays are once again among us. We started off the holiday season with our Johnston City Community Thanksgiving service on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Delivering the message was, Ryan Loucks, minister of First Christian Church. We enjoyed a delicious pie fellowship afterwards.

We held a special Thanksgiving service at the Anchor, an assisted living facility in Marion. The small gathering was a wonderful time of singing and praising the Lord together.

To help others in our community we have been collecting non-perishable food items for the JC Ministerial Alliance Christmas food basket give-away.

As Christmas is right around the corner we were blessed with a breathtaking performance by our adult choir on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Our D6 kids and children's church will present their Christmas program December 20<sup>th</sup>. Lastly, we will be having a Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 5pm. It will last less than an hour so whoever attends can resume their Christmas activities.

We are proud to say we witnessed two baptisms this month! Hallelujah!

Christmas time is a beautiful time of year, but it can become stressful and financially draining, let's not forget the real reason for the season!

**Pastor: Keith Fletcher**

**Reporter: Caiden Randolph**

## **FIRST CHURCH – Mount Vernon**

No complaining from me – December has been pretty good to us weather wise. May not go out that way, but has been pretty nice.

The WNAC met December 7th for their Christmas party. Everyone had a good time starting off with a great meal prepared by everyone there and afterwards there was a gift exchange. It was a great time!

Brother David has really been busy with several funerals, several people sick and in the hospitals. We were worried that he was going to be among the sick ones, but think he was just extremely tired.

We had a fundraiser December 13th for Lazaro and Ariadna Riesgo from Cuba. They are in Nashville, TN. working as educational specialist for Hispanic ministries.

We are having a Christmas Play the morning of December 20th and that night we will have communion and a candle light service.

Brother David and Sister Pat will be having an anniversary on Christmas Day! I am sure they would appreciate a card from you! Merry Christmas from Mt. Vernon First

*"Every heart without Christ is a mission field - Every heart with Christ is a missionary."*

**Pastor: David Shores**

**Youth Minister: Phillip Kennedy**

**Reporter: Donnie Shurtz**

## **ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH – Rural Creal Springs**

Average Sunday School attendance during November was 98. The morning worship average was 153. Loren Johns, 82, passed away on November 5. Imogene Brush, 81, passed away on November 12. Robert "Bobby" Mausey Jr., 85, passed away on December 5. He faithfully served as a deacon, superintendent and teacher at Arnold View. Condolences to these families.

The Women Active for Christ meeting was held on November 11. Veterans Recognition Day was held on November 15. Wayne Doss, Jerry Norris and Chuck Mausey shared about their military experiences. Our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner was that evening. Our Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 18.

There were 142 Operation Christmas Child boxes packed, dedicated and delivered to the drop-off site. The 5th Sunday evening service on November 29 was a blessing.

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." - 2 Peter 3:18

**Pastor: Ivan Ryan**

**Reporter: Buddy Parks**

## **BEAR POINT – Rural Sesser**

Happy New Year and God's blessings in 2016.

On November 24 we hosted the annual community Thanksgiving service with good number from the community attending and we enjoyed a good time of testimonies, singing and preaching by Brother Steve Livingston, pastor of the 1st Baptist Church in Valier. The service is presented each year by the Sesser-Valier Ministerial Alliance.

On November 28 some of our people participated in a live nativity during Old Fashion Christmas in Sesser. Also our youth had a food stand to raise money for youth projects and Nationals.

We had a singsperation on Sunday night November 29. Several presented readings and special music. It was a good time of praising God, hearing testimonies and singing Christmas songs.

Prayers are extended to the families of Jim and Paulette Newbury in the loss of Jim's mother Doris Newbury, Larry and Lynn Martin in the loss of Lynn's mother Betty Walker and Judson and Kayla Phenicie in the loss of Judson's grandfather Roger Phenicie. Thoughts are with all our families who have lost loved ones during the year.

Congratulations to John and Heidi Zsido on the birth of their daughter Emerson Grace. Grandparents are Jerome and Patty Kopec.

The ladies of the church enjoyed a Christmas party December 8 at the home of Linda Cook. We had a good time of fellowship, eating and exchanging gifts.

**Pastor: Larry Cook   Associate Pastor: Judson Phenicie   Reporter: Linda Cook**

## **HAZEL DELL CHURCH - Rural Sesser**

Hope you all enjoyed a blessed Christmas and our wishes to you for a great New Year!!

The Sesser Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 24<sup>th</sup> at the Bear Point Church. Brother Steve Livingston was the speaker.

The WAC and Men's Prayer Breakfast groups met for their respective meetings on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Sister Karen Harrison is currently updating the Birthday and Anniversary calendar. If you attend our church regularly and your name is not already in our database please let Sister Karen know so she can get the 2016 calendar information updated.

A special thank you to Sister Kerry Drake, Larry and Len Jones, Brenda Mines, Malori Newbury, and Danny and Diana Kirk for decorating the church for the Christmas season.

Our children have been practicing for the Children's Christmas Program which will be presented on Sunday morning, December 20<sup>th</sup>. A Christmas Fellowship Dinner is planned for the evening of December 20<sup>th</sup>.

*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." - Luke 2:14*

**Pastor: Eric Drake**

**Reporter: Diana Kirk**

## **PARTIAL REPORT FROM FREE WILL BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS BOARD**

The Board of Free Will Baptist International Missions met December 9-10, 2015, in the Antioch, Tennessee. Here is a partial report of actions taken by the board. The following motion was made: "...for FWBIM to adopt a designated-giving funding system with individual accounts. All account balances remain as designated."

This bold statement reflects the board's desire to maximize the gospel witness through our missionaries' sacrificial efforts in the context of Free Will Baptist churches, pastors, and supporters. Our heart's desire is to see God's Kingdom grow because of Free Will Baptist's unwavering commitment to the Great Commission.

The board endorsed goals proposed by the International Missions Leadership Team. The team proposed: 1) increasing the financial reserves to 20% of the operational budget; 2) increasing the number of international churches by 20%; 3) increase the number of believers internationally by 20%; 4) increase the number of monthly donors by 20%; and 5) increase the number of cross-cultural missionaries by 20%. The goals reflect the team's commitment to the IM Mission Statement.

The IMLT plan to achieve these goals within a five-year period or by December 2020. More information concerning these goals will be released in the near future.

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# Newsletter

Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists  
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## ILLINOIS STATE ASSOCIATION

MARCH 17-18-19, 2016

CALVARY CHURCH in SALEM

THEME: “Ministering With Purpose”

Philippians 1:19-21 “For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

### PROGRAM

**Thursday Evening Seminar by 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