



Illinois Free Will Baptist

January 2020

# Newsletter

**This is the year for our churches to have an Acts 20:20 Vision!**

## ILLINI INITIATIVE

**Missionary Leader: Tyler Penn**

It has been a whirlwind of a fall here in Champaign. Every year when we get to December we always say the same thing. "How is it the end of the semester already?" We have really enjoyed our time with the students this fall, from a corn maze, to Thanksgiving, and to wrap things up with Christmas celebrations.

One big step for our church with international students has been the start of our family connection ministries. This is where a family in the Bridge Church gets connected with international students. We had five families involved with this ministry this semester. We are really excited about this development, for what it means not only for our students but for our church people as well.

The Thanksgiving dinner at the English Corner put on by the Bridge FWB Church was also a great success. We fed around 75 international students a full Thanksgiving meal. It was the first time for most of them to have a turkey dinner. We also asked our Brazilian friend to play some Brazilian style music and for students to share what they were thankful for. I was really impressed with the volunteers from our church who helped make this possible as well as the pie makers from the Decatur FWB church. It was great to see a student show up at church on Sunday because of the dinner we had for them.

My prayer as we go through this Christmas season is that some of our students will be awakened to the reality of Jesus, His birth, His life, and His death and resurrection. I presented the reason we celebrate the season at our Christmas English Corner meeting. I pray it continues to speak to hearts and open up conversations about the gospel of Jesus. We are having about 15 students over on December 14<sup>th</sup> for Christmas baking day at our home. It will be a fun day for sure, but I also hope that it is a day to reconnect to the reason for it all, Jesus.

May God bless you and may your Christmas season be filled with hope and light. Thank you so much for your prayers for us and our students and thank you for your concern for the gospel to reach those who have no idea. Thank you.

## HAZEL DELL CHURCH

**Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Diana Kirk**

Oh, what a wonderful time of year!! Many activities are taking place and the decorations are wonderful. Thank you to Sister Emilee, Cindy Davey, Monica Myers, Len Jones, Brenda Mines and Diana Kirk for decorating the church for the holidays!

We send our condolences to Brother Denny and Sister Donna Dial at the passing of Donna's mother, Peggy Hergert. Peggy passed away on November 22nd .

We extend our sympathy to the family of Brother Gerald Hamilton who passed away on December 2nd . Brother Gerald was a member of Hazel Dell for 60 years. Thank you to all who helped in providing a meal for the family following the funeral. The family was very appreciative.

The Men's Prayer Breakfast was held on Sunday, December 7th .

Sister Emilee directed our children's play entitled "Just a Little Christmas." It was performed on Sunday morning, December 15th . The children did an excellent job and we thank you, Sister Emilee, for putting this all together.

Each year we have the opportunity to be a blessing to others by providing clothing to less fortunate children in our school system. Thank you to all who helped in completing this project. Special thanks to Sister LeAnn Miller for organizing this for our church.

Sister Emilee is planning a new Bible Study program for young mothers in our area. This will start in January. Please pray for this new ministry. A nursery will be provided. Interested mothers can check with Sister Emilee for more details.

*"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder:  
and his name shall be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God,  
The everlasting Father,  
The Prince of Peace." -Isaiah 9:6*

Have a Blessed and Happy New Year **2020**

## BLUE POINT CHURCH

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis**

Our Junior High Sunday school class recently used their Sunday school offerings to buy items for the Compassion Pregnancy Center in Fairfield. The High School Sunday school class helped sort all the groceries for the North Wayne Ministerial Alliance Christmas baskets. The Kingdom Builders Sunday school class held a Christmas breakfast at the church on a Sunday morning in December. The Faithful Stewards Sunday school class was treated to a catered lunch in the Link by their teacher. Two of our junior Sunday school classes went caroling to shut-ins in our community.

On the first Wednesday of December we fed the Connect Group of teenagers in the Link. Afterwards the group went caroling to several area homes. A group from the church traveled to the Effingham Performance Center to see the Christmas concert of Dailey and Vincent. Brother Ernie attended the Leadership Conference in Nashville with Suzanne going along for the ride and to visit family. Brother Ernie also enjoys the area Pastor's Breakfast in Mt. Vernon on the first Monday of each month.

We held our annual Candlelight Service on the 15th of December. Despite the snowy weather we had a great crowd and many participated. We enjoyed a fellowship in the Link afterwards with our many visitors.

We offer our sympathy to the family of long time member Hazel Smith. Hazel passed away in her home recently under the care of her daughter.

## FIRST CHURCH – BENTON

**Pastor: Phillip Kennedy Reporter: Barbara Spencer**

Our church looks very festive with its Christmas decorations and we thank those who did all the work. But we must not forget the real reason for this very special time. Our Lord's birth should be celebrated every day, not just once a year.

The WAC ladies had their meeting on December 5th with a luncheon following. Darline Zimmerman read the story of Mary. Gifts were exchanged. On December 8th we were pleased to have the Clyatts visiting from Florida. They came to see granddaughter Delaney perform in the Madrigals. Brother Larry brought the sermon and we learned a different story about the shepherds and why God chose them to deliver the news. That afternoon, there was caroling as a group visited shut-ins and returned to be fed. We ask for continued prayers for those on our sick list as well as those on other church lists. Jerry Legendre had surgery on December 11th and Robert Page had surgery on his shoulder on December 12<sup>th</sup>. An answered prayer is that Norma Page was able to return to church after her surgery. There are those who have other problems this time of year, for some it isn't that happy time for many reasons, remember them too.

*My interpretation - For unto us is born in the city of David, a savior who is Christ the Lord - and the weight of the world will be upon his shoulders.  
Merry Christmas and Blessings in the New Year.*

## BAKERVILLE CHURCH

**Pastor: David Mishler Reporters: Phyllis Kash and Cheryl Mishler**

Greetings from Bakerville FWB Church! Things have been pleasantly busy around Bakerville and we wanted to share with you some of the blessings that we have been experiencing! Sister June Hall recently joined our church family and we are thrilled to have her with us! Pastor David married Norma Bowles and Charles Setzekorn at the church in a private ceremony on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Congratulations Norma and Charles!

Sister Linda Smith rededicated her life and was baptized for the second time on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Sister Linda said she was baptized as a child but did not really understand what it meant and she wanted to be baptized again as an outward appearance of her renewed faith. We are all excited for Sister Linda!

On November 17th, we had our Thanksgiving meal and we had 75 people who enjoyed a time of delicious food and wonderful fellowship. A big THANK YOU to Linda and Paula for preparing the turkeys. They were very tasty!

During the month of November our church family had opportunities to share God's love with others by filling shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child program as well as put together "Hope Bags" for the Elle Project. These bags are given out to children who must be in the area hospitals during the holidays. We may never see the joy that these boxes and bags bring to a child but we know that what is done for Christ will be blessed. So, we all must continue to sow the seeds of God's love and let Him take care of the harvest.

"Every Knee Shall Bow" was the name of our Christmas program that was presented the morning of December 8<sup>th</sup>. It was a great reminder that we need to take the time to "Pause and Worship" baby Jesus during the Christmas season and a reminder as well, that whether we accept or reject Christ, every knee shall bow before Him one day. If we want to live with Him eternally, we need to accept His gift of Salvation that was delivered on that first Christmas day. Everyone did a fantastic job in the play!!! That evening some of our folks went caroling at a couple of our local care facilities. This is always such a blessing and always something many of our people look forward to each year.

On October 24<sup>th</sup> our dear sister, Connie Heppe, went to be with the Lord after a long battle with cancer. She is greatly missed but we rejoice to know that she is no longer in pain and is now completely healed. Praise God! Please be in prayer for Bob Heppe and his family. Another year is now upon us which means that we have another year of opportunities to serve our Lord. Happy Serving!

## ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH

**Pastor: Ivan Ryan Assistant Pastor: Adam Brown**

**Reporter: Buddy Parks**

Average Sunday School attendance during November was 90. We had a huge turnout for Trunk or Treat. Booths were set up in the gym and meals were served in the basement. A group from our church made a trip to The Judgement House at Dorrisville Baptist Church.

Our Veterans were recognized on November 10. The Women Active for Christ Meeting was held on November 13. Arnold View had a booth at the Midwest Event Center on November 16. Robby Clark-Stokes shared his testimony on November 17.

Our Church Thanksgiving Dinner was that evening. Our Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 20. Our choir sang a medley of songs. David Anderson and Andrea Harris sang specials. Brother Bryant Harris shared a Thanksgiving message. Bob Hill, 90, passed away on November 16. Condolences to his family.

Our church collected 102 gift-filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. A shut-in service was held on December 8 at the home of Wayne and Hazel Doss. Brother Adam Brown continues his messages out of 1 John on Sunday evenings.

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!  
who hast set thy glory above the heavens." - Psalm 8:1

## PITTSBURG CHURCH

**Pastors: Eddie Donelson and Keith McDannel**

**Reporter: Heather Phillips**

Greetings from PFWBC! We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas season and were able to take a moment to reflect on all of your blessings since last Christmas!

Looking back in December...The Christmas Craft Bazaar was a huge success. We had a variety of specialty items and yummy FOOD items as well. There were so many smiling faces and lots of happy shoppers! Also in December, our kids in AWANA celebrated the season with pizza, games, and a movie for their annual Christmas party! They were ready for their Christmas break to begin!!

As this is being written, we are preparing for the PFWBC Kids Christmas program. The kids range in age from birth-5<sup>th</sup> grade who will participate and show off their talents through song, instrument solos, choir singing, and scripture readings! This is always a favorite service of many! In addition, we are hosting a Community Christmas Dinner on December 23, in our Fellowship Hall. We always welcome anyone who would enjoy a nice meal for the holidays! We are looking forward to serving our community. I will have an update on that event next month!

As we think about the New Year, it is important to remember that God has the power to take us into 2020 with a fresh and new start. He is God Almighty, our Comforter, our Closest Companion, and our Friend. Sometimes the people and things around us shift or change, our Heavenly Father stays the same. The calendar tends to slow down after the New Year at PFWBC, but we are looking forward to planning for 2020!

*"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Romans 8:38-39*

## WALTONVILLE CHURCH

**Pastor: Mark Wells Reporter: David Miller**

It's been a very exciting and blessed time at the Waltonville FWB Church! We had a wonderful Homecoming in September with Brother Mark Wells preaching and music by the Peyton Sisters. We gathered for lunch following the service and enjoyed a time of fellowship. October 27th was an exciting day for our church as Brother Mark Wells accepted the call to become our Pastor. We are very excited to have him lead us and for Sister Tammy Wells, who has blessed us with her talents by agreeing to play piano for us. That evening we hosted a trunk or treat and had over 200 stop by for treats and balloons. We are very thankful for Brother Harrell Hungate who served us as Pastor for the past several years. We wish him well as he enjoys his retirement.

December 6th we had a pizza, popcorn and movie night to see "The Star". We invited the grade school and had a great turnout! We are blessed to have Josh and Fallon Ellis as youth leaders and for their dedication to serve. On December 1st, we had 9 adults and 5 children join our church!! Praise the Lord!!!

December 15th we presented Brother Harrell with a card and a gift thanking him for his service. We also had our Christmas party with a fish fry and a gift exchange and presents for our youth. We feel blessed to have delivered food baskets to several families in our community. We are excited about our growth and are looking forward to 2020 to see what's next.

*"Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God. He is the One Who made all light. He does not change. No shadow is made by His turning". - James 1:17.*

**OR CURRENT RESIDENT**

*Note to reporters: The deadline for the February Newsletter is January 15<sup>th</sup> Please send all correspondence to:  
David Shores 25 Edgewood Road Mt. Vernon, IL 62864 or e-mail to [davids@myfreewillbaptist.org](mailto:davids@myfreewillbaptist.org)*

### **REQUEST FROM DR. ALTON LOVELESS**

A letter was sent to me, but I am passing it on to our readers. Brother Loveless has written several books on Free Will Baptist history and has recently compiled a list of ministers who have gone on to be with the Lord. He has traced their history and even listed their burial sites. He is now trying to locate information on ladies who served as ministers. He writes,

“David here is a list of women ministers who have roots in the state of Illinois. These ministers are known in Illinois, but I have not located their burial cemetery or biography. At this time I have located about 100 FWB Women ministers. Can you give any information on any of these:

Alethia Etheridge, Carrie Nichols, Venita Kern,

Irene Sullivan pastored Harmony West City – (1969 newsletter),

Mary Weatherford pastored Pleasant View (1925-1929, Church history).

Pauline Osborn is listed in 1961 Illinois State Minutes, Emma Moore in 1961, Vivian Dunning in 1961, Vivian Downen 1949, and Pearl Perriman 1949.

According to the 1908 Central Illinois Yearly Meeting of Free Baptists: Elizabeth Whitacre - held 7 revivals, souls saved 100, sermons preached 150 and Julia Humprey - held 9 meetings, 355 reclamations and conversions, Edna Wells - pastor at Carterville, held 7 revivals, souls justified 344.”

If any of our readers have information on any of these, please contact Brother Alton Loveless –


[alton.loveless@prodigy.net](mailto:alton.loveless@prodigy.net)

**Be praying for our State Meeting in March at Calvary Church in Salem –Hotel information and program will be included in next month’s Newsletter.**

*From the Illinois State Association,*

*We pray that you will have great blessings throughout the coming year...*

*God bless you!*



“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

*Happy  
New Year*