



ILLINOIS FREE WILL BAPTIST

OCTOBER 2021

# NEWSLETTER

A monthly publication for Illinois Free Will Baptist families

## Our Pastor

You *lead* our congregation by opening  
God's Word, and then you *live*  
your life reflecting all we've heard.

You *care* for others deeply  
and lift them up in *prayer*,  
and when we face misfortune,  
we know that you'll be there.

We really love you, Pastor,  
for *everything* you do.

And we thank God

for giving us a  
*Pastor like you.*

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*Remember...*

*October is Pastor  
Appreciation Month*

## OAK GROVE CHURCH TO CLOSE

On Saturday, November 13th Oak Grove FWB Church will be holding its 107th and final Homecoming. It is holds many wonderful memories along with some sad.

For this celebration of 107 years we are inviting our Free Will Baptist family to join us on November 13th at 5 PM. Supper will be served, memories shared, and singing by the Gospel Messengers.

If you cannot attend and would like to share a memory please call Debbie at 618-218-3328 or send an email at [dkash\\_5@hotmail.com](mailto:dkash_5@hotmail.com).

## BENTON CHURCH

**Pastor: Phillip Kennedy**

In the month of August we had Emily Petty come and share with us about what God is doing in her life and Japan! She did a fantastic job. At the end of August we had our first birthday/ anniversary meal. (We call it A Day B Day) this was the first time we had celebrated this since covid. It was a wonderful time of Fellowship!

On Wednesday nights for 10 weeks we went through the Ten Commandments. We finished that up at the beginning of September. Also at the beginning of September we started using the prayer calendar put out by the national offices. Each day has a Bible verse and a specific area for us to pray for. This has been a great resource!

On September 12th we had Roger Bennett come and share with us about Welch College and he also preached for us.

Camp meeting was wonderful with Dr. Eddie Moody and we are looking forward to the Masters Men Retreat and the Women's Retreat as well! Lots of activities coming up in October!

Pray for those that are sick and pray that we will reach our communities with the light of Jesus Christ!

## **HARMONY CHURCH**

**Pastor: Bruce Thurman    Reporter: Cody Alstat**

Greetings from Harmony. At the beginning of August our church started up a food pantry for families that were in need. We have had a few families already partake in this ministry and we are blessed to be able to provide. Some of the men of the church built us a storage cabinet for this ministry. We held Communion after morning worship on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Our Sisters of Strength & Masters Men met for our annual meeting on August 10<sup>th</sup>. We held a back to school blast in August where the kids got to have a pizza party on a Wednesday night. Our Youth have been working hard everyone Sunday morning to prepare for our Youth Christmas Play, please remember to keep us in your prayers during our practices. Please keep our Pastor in your prayers as he will be having a few surgeries coming up within the next few months. We want to thank Brother Dink Phelps for filling in for Brother Bruce on a Sunday morning. We appreciate everyone that attended the Camp Meeting from our Church.

*"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32 (KJV)*

## **ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH**

**Pastor: Adam Brown    Reporter: Buddy Parks**

Average Sunday School Attendance during August was 78. The Women Active For Christ Meeting was held on August 11. Nancy Edwards, 81, passed away on August 17. Gale Mausey, 88, passed away on August 20. Nancy Penninger, 59, passed away on August 25. Condolences to those families. Our Fifth Sunday Song Service on August 29 was a blessing.

Some from our church participated in the Veterans Parade in Marion on September 11. Arnold View's Homecoming Service was held on September 12. Dr. Eddie Moody was the guest speaker. Brother Randy Settle sang some inspirational songs. We enjoyed a delicious meal in our gym.

*"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful," – Colossians 3:15*

## **WALTONVILLE CHURCH**

**Pastor: Mark Wells    Reporter: Chris Kuhner**

We had the second food pantry give away and we were blessed to serve 10 different families this month. While we were handing out food we were able to have prayer for a young lady that is fighting drug and alcohol problems in her life. There was another young lady that came in during the food give away and ask if we had a class for a two or three year olds. we said yes we do and she said that she would be there the next Sunday. We had three families in church test positive for covid so keep us in your prayers.

Our church was invited to go with the Community Church to Good Samaritan Hospital to pray for Beverly Gilbert. She was in the hospital with covid. she is the sister in-law to Brother Jerry Gilbert one of our deacons. It's always good for the church of God to get with other churches to pray as Christians. We thank the lord for answering our prayers for Matthew Uhls. he is going through rehab and is working very hard to get to come home after his bout with covid. His dad and i rode to work together till I retired. Brother Bill Uhls pastors the 2nd Baptist Church in Valier. Bill lost his wife to covid, so please keep this family in your prayers as well. Our homecoming is the 26th of September at 10:00 a.m. with a dinner afterward. The Riven Quartet from St. Louis, Missouri will be singing at 1:00 p.m. that afternoon. Come out and see what the Lord has been doing at our church. Hope to see you there.

## **OAK VALLEY CHURCH**

**Pastor: Richard Brown    Reporter: Marie Rutger**

Greetings! We will be having our Annual Homecoming on Sunday. September 26. We will be having a meal at noon for everyone.

On Saturday October 9 we will host the East Central District meeting beginning at 9:00am.

Brother Richard is recovering from hip replacement surgery and Sister Valerie is recovering from major surgery as well.

Brother Byran and Sister Kim Belangee has filled in a couple weeks and we appreciate their help.

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?" - Psalm 29:12*

## BLUE POINT CHURCH

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter Suzanne Lewis**

A van load and a car load of people from the church used free tickets to see the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Milwaukee Brewers. Several ladies traveled to the park in Mattoon to see the 'Harvest of Hope Concert', sponsored by WBGL. The headline singers were Zach Williams and Anne Wilson.

After missing last year due to Covid restrictions we year. We were able to give away clothes, toiletries, and household items to almost two hundred people. Two barbers worked all morning to provide free haircuts. We also provided a free lunch to all in attendance.

Nick and Rebecca (Smith) Eckelberry held an Open "Eckelberry Barber Company". Many of our church people were able to attend.

Several of our people worked one afternoon in August to provide supper for those attending the Open House at the Johnsonville Grade School. Our men cooked hamburgers and hotdogs for 180 people and our ladies served them with chips and drinks. We enjoy serving our community.

Over Labor Day weekend while Brother Ernie was gone, Larry Cook filled in for both the morning and evening service. On Grandparents Day all the grandparents were given a round of applause and were presented with a small gift. Brother Ernie and Suzanne enjoyed some of the services at the Adult Camp Meeting with Brother Eddie Moody. Brother Ernie was also able to attend the breakfast at the Ina Church where Brother Moody also shared. Congratulations to Cam and Chloe Gibson on the birth of their first son, Luke Matthew. Proud grandparents are Rod and Brooke Byars.

### **JCity Center for Hope and Renewal GRAND OPENING CELEBRATION**

**Saturday, October 2 2:30 – 8:30 pm**

**503 East Broadway Johnston City**

Free BBQ Dinner 4:00 -5:30

Free musical entertainment featuring

**ZANE DAVIS and The FARM HANDS**

## PITTSBURG CHURCH

**Pastor: Eddie Donelson Pastor: Keith McDannel**

**Recorder: Heather Phillips**

"Livin' All for the SON in 2021"

We hope everyone had a good September and a wonderful start to the school year! Summer has officially gone and fall has arrived! The warmth of summer can still be felt, but the air is beginning to feel crisp. If you look closely, the leaves are beginning to turn from green to yellow, brown, orange, and red.

Our monthly "HE KEEPS ME SINGING" was held on Sunday, September 19. This month's theme was "Magnify His Holy Name." We had a special speaker, lots of scripture was shared, and of course, our wonderful worship team was there to lead us in songs that "Magnified" our Lord and Savior. The next "HE KEEPS ME SINGING" will be on October 12, in the PFWBC Chapel at 6:30pm. Please join us...everyone is always welcome!

A favorite time of the year for many at PFWBC is Pastor Appreciation Month. So many great opportunities to lift them up in prayer, fellowship with other brothers and sisters, and enjoy breaking bread with one another are being planned this month. Even though we appreciate them and thank God every day for our wonderful pastors, we enjoy spoiling them a bit more during the month of October!

PFWBC has been so blessed!! On October 3, we will be celebrating our 114<sup>th</sup> Homecoming. Following the service, we will have a fish fry meal and all of the 'fixings' to go along with it! The day is certain to be filled with joy and gratitude as we celebrate God's using our church to accomplish His mission and His purpose. We hope you will come celebrate with us on this special day!

October is a very busy month here at PFWBC. We have so much to look forward to this month! We pray everyone is enjoying the beautiful scenery that only our Heavenly Father could create!

*"I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds." - Psalm 9:1*

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

*The deadline for news articles for publication in the November issue of the Newsletter is October 15.  
Please address all correspondence to [davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org](mailto:davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org)*

## BEAR POINT CHURCH

**Pastor: Gowdy Cannon    Reporter: Mona Lappin**

Happy fall y'all! ( a nod to our pastor's southern roots). Since we have not sent a report in a while here is our "Summer Summary"...Pastor Gowdy celebrated his birthday on June 7th, and was given a love offering from the congregation. We enjoyed a Watermelon Social on July 4th at the church pavilion. As usual we Baptist's had more to eat than just watermelon. There was no fried chicken, but we did enjoy fresh corn on the cob, sandwiches and delectable desserts in addition to the watermelon.

We had 22 members attend the National Convention in July. 7 students competed on 2 Bible teams, and we had several music and arts entries. We had two First Place winners Ava Hollis-Painting, and Layla Newbury - Photo Essay, with several others placing in Music and Arts categories. July ended *right on track* with our VBS **Rocky Railway**. Sister Chrissy and gang did a fantastic job sharing the gospel with young folks from the community with great lessons and songs. Some kids came from as far as North Carolina to attend!

(Arthur and Ellie Lappin) The average attendance was about 50 per night and several decisions were made- Praise God!

Sister Kayla celebrated her birthday in August also receiving a love offering from the congregation. Two other **milestone birthdays** were celebrated as two very special members Brother Jim Dean and Sister Jean Ragland both turned "90"! We are so grateful for their example and faithfulness.

The WAC tried out the new Mexican restaurant in Christopher and have made plans to go to O'Charleys on September 21st. They will host our upcoming **150th Homecoming on October 24th**, with former *Pastor Bro. Larry Cook* bringing the message and music by *The Peyton Sisters*. Looking forward to a GREAT DAY, and even more so to our eternal HOMECOMING IN HEAVEN.

"Our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." - *Philippians 3:20*