



ILLINOIS FREE WILL BAPTIST

JUNE 2021

NEWSLETTER

A monthly publication for Illinois Free Will Baptist families

Leadership Camp: June 2-4
Junior/Senior Camp: June 6-11
Fresh/Soph Camp: June 13-18



Junior Camp: June 20-25
Primary Camp: June 27-July 1
Junior High Camp: July 4-9

The **Camp Board** has mailed programs, date calendars and registration forms to our churches. The camps for 2021 begin June 2. Ryan Payne and Olivia Payne have been hired as Summer S.A.M. workers at camp this year. Also, Camp Hope received a \$20,000 grant from the FWB Foundation for Campground Improvement Projects.

The **CTS State Competition** was held April 23-24 at Ina Church with 5 churches represented, 49 participants and 65 entries. There will be 32 groups and individuals going to the National in Memphis.

The **Master's Men Board** will have their annual retreat this year on September 16-18 at Camp Hope. Eric Martin of Oklahoma will be the speaker; Adam Brown will conduct the Communion Service on Friday night. The Youth Fishing Tournament, held on May 1st had 15 participants with the following results:

1st Place: Layla Newbury and Brooklyn Hicks (Bear Point Church)

2nd Place: trace Beaty and Hayden Corn (Rescue Church)

Guppy Award: James Kennedy (Benton Church)

Biggest Fish Award: Xavier Miller – 15oz Blue Gill (Hazel Dell)

BROTHER WALTER FREEMAN WITH THE LORD

Brother Walter Don Freeman, age 55, of Benton; went to be with his Lord and Savior on Monday, May 3, 2021. A Memorial Celebration of Life Service was held at the Rescue Free Will Baptist Church on Sunday afternoon, May 16. Brother Walter was a Free Will Baptist minister, served as pastor of the Oak Grove Church for several years, and was a member of the Rescue Church.

Brother Freeman was born June 21, 1965 in Fort Smith, Arkansas; the son of Joe and Loretta (Jetton) Freeman. He married the former Karen Denise Bland on January 11, 1985 and she survives. He and his wife Karen are the owners of KOA Campground of Benton. He was the President of the Illinois Campground Association and he was the Vice-President of the Benton-West City Chamber of Commerce. He enjoyed anything outdoors, especially fishing. He enjoyed spending time with his family and visiting with the campers at KOA.

Surviving is His loving wife of 36 years Karen Denise Freeman of Benton; a son Carl Freeman of St. Charles, MO; two daughters: Kacie Freeman and Caitlyn Garris of Benton. Please remember his family in your prayers.



CONNECT CHURCH

Pastor: Dan Smith Reporter: Shirley Brown

Hello, to all our Sister Churches. The Lord is doing wonderful things in Connect Church and Connect Christian School! We have 34 students presently attending Connect Christian School and expect that number to increase as we approach the 2021-22 school year. We are happy and grateful that parents are choosing to make the sacrifice to see their children receive a Christian education. God is good!

One of our young marrieds, Sister Kayla Rhodes, has felt the Holy Spirit leading her to mission outreach. She has arranged for events called "Praise in the Park" at three local parks: Roxana, Bethalto and Wood River. The events will be held on May 8, June 19 and July 10 and include praise songs, a short message, free food, crafts, face painting and games for children and adults. This is an opportunity for church members to get involved in local mission work. Many hands make light work, and we will be able to let our neighbors know who we are, the One we serve and that Connect Church is here for them. Praise the Lord for this young mother being led by the Holy Spirit! *"Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus." - 1 Peter 5:14b*

HARMONY CHURCH

Pastor: Bruce Thurman Reporter: Cody Alstat

Greeting from Harmony Church. The Master's Men and Sisters of Strength had a clean-up day at the church on April 17th. We want to thank everyone that came to help get the church ready for our homecoming services. After the clean-up Brother Dick fixed fish and a small devotion was given by Brother Randy Blades talking about the many jobs there are in a church. Harmony held the South Central Quarterly meeting on April 24th. The men of the church prepared brunch for everyone that attended. The speaker Tyler Penn talked about what was happening at the Bridge Church and showed us pictures of events that they have been able to have over the past year.

On May 2nd we celebrated our 189th year of ministry. Jason Jean, pastor of Union Free Will Baptist was our guest speaker, we had a total of 79 people in attendance. We held our fellowship after the morning message. Jason and Sherri Jean Family were the singers in the afternoon service.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you." - John 14:2

FIRST CHURCH - MOUNT VERNON

Pastor: David Shores Associate Pastor: Craig Smith

Our church is trying to return to open in person services with the same freedoms we enjoyed before the pandemic. We still respect our Illinois restrictions, but most people are ready to get rid of the masks! This has been a long 15 months. We have also had 4 people pass away in 2021, none from covid. We miss Esther Williams, Ron Levitt, Norma Coil and Sonny Ellis, plus several people in our church have had close relatives go to be with the Lord. Our church is looking up! We know the Lord has great blessings awaiting us in the future. We had a young man give his heart to the Lord recently. That is always an encouragement when people get saved.

The ladies WNAC had their first in person meeting this year on May 12th with 10 ladies present. They had a lesson presented by Sister Pat Shores and had a time of prayer and fellowship. They have undertaken several projects this year, raised money for missions by selling calendars, maintained a clothes distribution, provided gifts for Mother's day and sent \$2300 to IM for WMO Sunday. The Master's Men have their meeting on the first Saturday of each month. Brother John Bumpus presents a devotional and they discuss various projects to do for the church and others. Several of the men went to Camp Hope to clean the gym and get it ready for summer youth camps. They have helped several people in the church and those outside the church. We are pleased with the Master's Men and the Women Active for Christ

WALTONVILLE CHURCH

Pastor: Mark Wells Reporter: Chad Kuhner

Hello from Waltonville Church. We met at our church for (Meet us at the Cross) on Thursday evening, May 6th for National Day of Prayer. The Waltonville School used our church for some testing on that day as well. We were glad that we could help that way. We are trying to reconnect with the two other churches in town so we can work together and be more powerful in our efforts to reach more people for the Lord. We have talked to the other two pastors to see if they would want to do a prayer walk around the town, and next fall have a prayer walk around the school before the school starts up. They both said that would be great, so we are working out a time that would be good for all who can come. Tina Fairchild retired from the postal service on May 7th. We are proud of her and the years that she was a witness for the Lord while delivering the mail around the area. We are also working to start a food pantry this summer.

HAZEL DELL CHURCH

Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Diana Kirk

Greetings from the folks at Hazel Dell. The ministerial alliance of Sesser hosted a prayer service at Miner's Memorial Park on Wednesday, May 5th.

We celebrated Mother's Day with tokens of appreciation for all the mothers/grandmothers present on that day.

Praise the Lord. Titus Smith, son of Brother Curtis and Sister Emilee has accepted the Lord as his Savior. It was such a blessing to hear Titus tell of his experience. He was so excited to tell the church about it. Shouldn't we all be as excited about the Lord as this young guy is?

Brother Justin Miller presented himself for church membership on Sunday, May 9th. All present were eager to welcome him into membership. Praise God for Brother Justin's desire to follow the Lord.

Our Senior Meals will pause the end of May for the summer months, but will resume in the fall. Thank you to all those who planned, prepared and delivered the meals for this outreach program. Many have expressed their appreciation of this effort.

We are having a Ladies Tea Party at Café Bloom in Benton on June 4th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. We are looking forward to this special event.

We will be doing some cleaning at Camp Hope in preparation for the camp season to begin. Anyone who would like to help check with Brother Curtis for the date.

We are planning to have VBS the week of August 2-6. As always, we will need willing workers.

We would ask that you remember Brother Brian Lewis and family in your prayers.

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him, and He shall direct your paths." - Proverbs 3: 5-6*

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH

Pastor: Adam Brown Reporter: Buddy Parks

Greetings from Arnold View! Average Sunday School attendance during April was 72. River Doss and Emma Damron were recently saved. The Women Active for Christ Meeting was held on April 14. Kenny and Janet Orr were recognized for their several years of service as church janitors. Congratulations to Tyson and Sarah Faulkner on the birth of Ariana Delores Faulkner on April 27. We resumed our Sunday Evening Services on May 2. Jason Dwyer and Josh Orrill were ordained as Deacons that evening. Our Mother/Daughter Banquet was held on May 3. The Arnold View Men's Group enjoyed a delicious breakfast at our church on May 8.

Pastor Adam Brown was recognized for his graduation from Welch College.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." - James

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT

*The deadline for news articles for publication in the July issue of the Newsletter is June 15.
Please address all correspondence to dauids@myfreewillbaptist.org*



2021 NATIONAL CONVENTION

Plan to join us for the 85th Free Will Baptist National Convention July 18-21 in Memphis, Tennessee. Impact Memphis outreach projects will be held Saturday, July 17 at two nearby Free Will Baptist churches. Pre-register at fwbmastersmen.org to receive a free t-shirt. Hotel reservations are open with rooms still available at all of the convention hotels. You can pre-register online to save time onsite. Find the schedule of convention seminars and more at nafwb.org/convention. Worship services and business sessions will be streamed live in both English and Spanish. See you in Memphis!