

ILLINOIS FREE WILL BAPTIST

OCTOBER 2023

NEWSLETTER

A monthly publication for Illinois Free Will Baptist families

OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH!



Thank you

WE APPRECIATE YOU, PASTOR



We thank God every time we think about you. And we pray for you with joy because of your partnership with us in the gospel.
Philippians 1: 3-4

*Do something super special this month for your Pastor...
show him your love for his ministry.*



On the first night of our annual Adult Camp Meeting on September 10, these six people were recognized as being present at the first Free Will Baptist Camp in the summer of 1951. They are (L-R) Lynn Smith, Pat Shores, Audrey Kash, Ron Malone, Darlene Zimmerman and Phyllis Kash.

Please mark this special day on your November calendar!



MISSION NORTH AMERICA OFFERING

November 19, 2023



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WALTONVILLE CHURCH

Pastor: Mark Wells Reporter: Tyler Klamm

Good Greetings and God Bless from Waltonville Church. The reporter has been asleep at the wheel for a couple months so we have plenty of news!

We had a youth fun day in July and had over 50 kids show up to enjoy our fellowship. Our school supply giveaway was a very big success, we gave away 115 backpacks, it's amazing the reach we have had in our community. Special thanks to Sister Kaylyn Klamm from Waltonville Church for leading these events for the kids. The Lord is doing amazing things through her.

The Food Pantry has grown exponentially, we have helped 22 new families in August alone. This ministry has grown in leaps and bounds. Special thanks to all the ladies and gentlemen who come and help on work days and preparation for the giveaway each month.

We are still needing more prayers in regards to our building. Our leadership along with the help of Sister Norma are applying for the Free Will Baptist grant as we look to build a new building and make it more accessible for our members and community. We will be looking at fundraising and donations. Keep a look out for updates. Please be in prayer that all of our work be God's will.

Our Homecoming was a success! We had great fellowship. Wonderful Worship service and message was brought to us by Steve Hall and family, Truth in Time www.truthintime.org

We have had several members go through procedures and surgeries recently. Please pray for their recoveries. May they all lean on the Lord to reach the pinnacle of their healing. Thank you again for all your prayers, we will be praying for you and yours as well.

HARMONY CHURCH

Interim Pastor: Kent Dunford Reporter: Alice Barron

Welcome fellow churches. Fall is just around the corner and Harmony is keeping busy.

On Sunday, August 20th, Faith Simpson joined Harmony Church and on Monday, August 21st she left for Bible College at Southeastern in Raleigh, N.C. We are very proud of Faith as she begins her journey to become a missionary.

Sunday evening services were canceled as many attended the revival at Hazel Dell Church. One of our former youths, Raleigh Dodd, is home on leave and scheduled to be deployed to Iraq, was in attendance at the Revival. Our prayers are with this young man.

Mark King is now teaching at Haiphong University in Vietnam with about 300 students. Mark is happy to be back teaching after 4 years. He is teaching British and American literature. Thank you Mark for the update. On Wednesday, August 30th before evening services, Kaitlynn Childers accepted Jesus as her personal Savior. Praise the Lord.

On Sunday, September 3rd, Kaitlynn and Karissa Childers, daughters of Eric and Laurie Childers, were baptized following the morning service. What a blessing to everyone.

Sunday, September 10, Rusty and Brenda Carney, Missionaries to Japan, came and told of their work there. Prayers for this family and their work. We are looking forward to the evening of Sunday, September 17th, when Harmony will host Youth Night with Jim McComas as our guest speaker. Brother Cody has been busy preparing for Music, Fun, Praise, Preaching and Eats. Come and be prepared for a great night.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.

In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world". - John 16:33

HERITAGE CHURCH

Interim Pastor: Steve Wease Reporter: Tom Hay

Heritage is moving forward working to spread the Gospel. We held an outdoor Fall Festival to reach out to the community with music, games, food, a Chili Cook-Off, magic show and a fiery gospel message. Although attendance was less than hoped for, it is a step in the right direction!

Renovation to our Fellowship Building continues and should be completed by early October.

We are planning a bus trio to the Ark Experience in Kentucky come mid-October.

*"Not that I have already attained, or am perfected; but I press on,
that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me." – Philippians 3:12*

BAKERVILLE CHURCH

Pastor: Robert Craig | Reporter: Jo Ann Craig

Greetings to our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. And just like that, it's September 2023! Cooler weather is slowly beginning to replace the hot, humid temperatures, such a welcomed blessing from the Heavenly Father. I'll fill you in on the September happenings in next month's newsletter!

I've watched and fed the hummingbirds all summer long. Their habits are just amazing. One or two stands guard of the feeders and can become quite vicious when a member of their little group decides it wants a drink. They chase each other and chirp at one another, until eventually one of them gives in. This reminded me of something I saw recently on Facebook in reference to guarding. We must guard our minds from Satan and the worldly things so we can allow God to guide our hearts, but we should also allow God to guide our minds in order to guard our hearts!

Hazell Dell hosted a revival the week of August 20 - 25, with a different preacher each night. We attended 4 of the 6 nights and were truly blessed with each message and message bearer. **Monday night** Brother Kenny Blumenstock brought the message on being stiff-armed. We hold God at arm's length and only allow him to draw close to us when we want him too and hold onto "stuff" instead of letting it go and letting GOD. **Tuesday night** Brother Andy Lee preached on temptations and how we need to fight our battles with Satan with God's Word to be victorious, not on our own, as we will be defeated. **Thursday night** Brother Kevin McNeely preached that we have to look at Christ, just as they looked to the serpent on the pole to live. We need to use our faith and look to Christ when we have been bitten by sin. **Friday night** Brother Robert Craig preached on "By This Time". Being able to identify opportunities will have a lot to do with how successful we will become in life and the life to come. Can we see our opportunities, and will we take advantage of them in time?

August 27, 2023, we had our congregational singing night. It was another great night of spiritual fellowship in song and in refreshments afterwards. We look forward to each month. We are discussing having one night a month in the fellowship hall of just pickin', singin' and grinin'. 😊 Stay tuned!!!

Our WCS (Women Caring and Sharing) ministry was held on September 9, 2023, with games, devotional/special speaker (Sister Jackie Capps), special singing and, of course, good food and fellowship as always. I love and thank God for all the beautiful ladies in our church!

When you pray, God listens, when you listen, God talks. When you believe, God works!

Remember: "Jesus loves us just as we are, but HE loves us too much to leave us just as we are!"

Prayer: "May you be blessed in the Lord and may you be a blessing to others!"

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH

Pastor: Adam Brown | Reporter: Jodi Tanner

Taking a brief look back at the past month, it has seemed like a month of celebrations. On August 25, Pastor Adam, Amanda, and Ella Kate welcomed Addy Jo Brown. Then, near the beginning of September, we were blessed to participate in the local Veterans on Parade. The mid-month marked our homecoming celebration. Maya Benoit followed the Lord in baptism on September 10. It was such a blessing to have Brother Jim McComas to speak and sing for this wonderful day. On the 30th, we had the opportunity to be part of the parade and Wonder Water Reunion in Creal Springs. These were all such blessings to our congregation. Our sincerest condolences are extended to the families of Gloria Newcomb and Kathryn Black.

As we look to this month, planning and preparation for our second Fall Festival is well underway. It is scheduled to be held October 21 from 2-6 in the afternoon. It promises to have fun activities, good food, and sweet fellowship for all ages. Training and preparation are also underway for Crab Orchard School's Good News Club that kicks off its fall sessions. As hosts of this club, please pray with us as we embark on this opportunity to share God's love with local students and their families. This fall, all the elementary grades first through fifth will be invited to participate. It's exciting to welcome new members to the Good News Club team this fall as well. Some youth from our church recently attended an evangelism conference. One of the takeaways they shared upon return was that the Lord calls and then equips us to carry out what He's called us to do. It's a good reminder for all of us as we reach out to others to know that Christ will equip us for every good work. He is capable of giving us everything needed—opportunities, time, words, wisdom, and any other ability or skill necessary to build up the body of Christ.

BEAR POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Gowdy Cannon Reporter: Mona Lappin

"Be glad, people of Zion, REJOICE in the Lord your God for He has given you the autumn rains because HE IS FAITHFUL". - (Joel 2:23)

Autumn has arrived and with every new season comes new ways to serve the Lord. Brother Gowdy has made September's Focus: PRAYING the Bible by providing scripture references each week in the bulletin. We are still working our way through Romans each Sunday and have been encouraged to go deeper by reading related passages each week to prepare for Sunday's sermon.

We are so blessed to have some precious souls in our church reach their 90th birthdays. This year Sister Ceola Benedict and Sister Sue Dean joined the "90's" club! Not only did Sister Sue celebrate a milestone birthday, but she and Brother Jim were honored on September 10th for their humble and faithful service to the community Lifeline program. For several years they have made sure that the church's part of that program was taken care of. Brother Gowdy recognized them and presented them with an appreciation plaque during the Sunday morning service. He also commented that several times when checking in on someone from the church in need...Brother Jim and Sue had already called, visited, or taken them food. What a BLESSING these two are. People in their 90's being the hands and feet of Jesus, proving you're never too old to serve the Lord.

The younger generation has been busy as well. The youth held a bake sale on the 10th, a spaghetti lunch on the 24th, and will be selling **Bear Point's Famous Fried Pies** in October!

Looking forward to the month of October for pies, Oktoberfest, and Bear Point's 152nd Homecoming. This reporter is especially looking forward to the guest speaker who happens to share the same last name!

"I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are walking in truth" - 3 John 1:4

PITTSBURG CHURCH

Pastor: Eddie Donelson, Pastor: Keith McDannel and Pastor: Josh Colson Recorder: Heather Phillips

We hope everyone had a good September and a wonderful start to the school year! Labor Day weekend signaled the end of summer and fall has officially arrived! Most of us enjoy the crisp fall air, drinking apple cider and taking in the stunning fall colors. Others enjoy things like football season and chili by the warmth of a fire. We pray everyone is enjoying the beautiful scenery that only our Heavenly Father could create!

Our 2023-2024 AWANA season kicked off on September 6. Our AWANA Club program is open to anyone ages 2-High School and is held each Wednesday evening from 6:30-8:00pm. Our program begins with Cubbies for preschool children, Sparks for Kindergarten through Second grade, T&T for Third through Sixth grade, Trek for Middle School and Journey for High School. The word AWANA stands for Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed and comes from the Bible verse 2 Timothy 2:15 - *"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* The kids work on scripture memorization as well as play games and hear a lesson taught by volunteers within our church. If you or someone you know is looking for a great program to be a part of, tell them about AWANA at PFWBC! We will also have adult classes available as well.

A favorite time of the year for many at PFWBC is Pastor Appreciation Month. Even though we appreciate them and thank God every day for our wonderful pastors, October is a great time to honor our pastoral families for their sacrificial dedication.

We are excited about what God is doing here at PFWBC! We are looking forward to all that God has for us in the future. On Sunday, October 1, we will be celebrating our 116th Homecoming. We celebrate Homecoming each year, taking the time to look back over the blessings of the past year and forward into the future with anticipation for what the Lord is going to do in the year to come. We are currently working on the details for our service, but we are prayerfully looking forward to what God has in store for us. 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!

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

Change what we see in 2023!

"Blessed are those who have not seen and have yet believed." - John 20:29

BENTON CHURCH

Pastor: Phillip Kennedy

Fall weather is coming and it is cooling down! Enjoy these nice cool days outside! It has certainly been a full month with plenty more to come! On August 17th we had a Student Hangout. On August 20th Joshua and Jackie Kennedy gave a presentation about the Romans Road to Salvation and one of the forms of Evangelism they had learned in Children's Church called Napkin Evangelism. Different ones from our Church enjoyed the Revival services at Hazel Dell in August as well! Pastor Phillip was able attend 2 services of the first Hispanic Camp at Camp Hope. Both the Revival and the Hispanic Camp meeting were fantastic and uplifting. On August 27th we participated in the WMO and had several coin boxes turned in for Missions!

We had our Open Gym Night on September 1st and had new people come (which happens most month) Please continue to pray for our open gym nights and Student Hangouts as outreaches to our community. We also had Student Hangout on September 7th. On September 11 we had Fellowship with the Pastor, a day we enjoyed conversation, coffee and donuts!

We have just finished Adult Camp Meeting and it was such a wonderful time of Worship and Fellowship! Thank you to the Ina FWBC for leading worship (plus so much more) and to Barry Simpson for preaching the Word!

Next month our Open Gym night is on October 6th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. We will have Fellowship with the Pastor on October 9th at 9 a.m. and Student Hangout October 19th. Plus more.

Keep serving the Lord! Our labor for the Lord is not in vain!

RESCUE CHURCH

Pastor: Bryant Harris Reporter: Donna Harmon

Hello from Rescue August was world missions offering. Also, that evening was food and fellowship. On Wednesday was Bible study and youth group. September camp meeting began after our morning service, evening service was dismissed for those to attend Camp Hope. September the 12th was the first day of Tuesday school. Wednesday service dismissed for Camp Hope. Squad 456 (I am late on this one). The group this time was 4th, 5th and 6th grade. Started at Rescue for Bible time, food, fellowship and went to bowling. How did fall get here so fast. All the shovels, hose, rakes will be on our list to find or? What will we do today. Fall is God's way of showing us how beautiful God's change can be. What an awesome God we serve. Our sympathy to the family of Bob Doty. Remember his wife, Trish.

INA CHURCH

Pastor: Brad Ryan Reporter: Katie Williams

This past month has been a quiet one for our church as summer ended and fall began. Some of our middle school youth enjoyed a Sunday afternoon group bike ride, and our Jr. High and High School youth enjoyed a cookout at Rend Lake. At the end of August, we had a fellowship with homemade ice cream.

Sadly, our church lost our beloved Bell Farmer on August 23rd. Bell was faithful to attend every Sunday, until a fall which required her to go to inpatient rehabilitation. Bell was such a sweet lady and loved to send cards to anyone she thought needed encouragement. She is greatly missed.

We have started a Youth Choir and they have been practicing to sing at our Homecoming Service on October 1st. We are grateful to everyone who works behind the scenes to make our church thrive.

IM ISSUES A CALL FOR ALL HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Catch up on the latest IM news this fall!

All high school students (10-12 grade) and college students are encouraged to apply in October for student missions opportunities taking place in 2024.

Read a story from a recent college student who served in France, meet your missionaries, and so much MORE in the September-October NewsBeat issue

<https://iminc.org/news/sept-oct-newsbeat/>

BLUE POINT CHURCH

Pastor Ernie Lewis Reporter Suzanne Lewis

In the month of August we hosted a blood drive for the American Red Cross. We also held a cook-out at the Johnsonville Grade School Open House, serving burgers and hotdogs to all the students, staff and family members who came. For our Senior Grocery Giveaway there were several who helped unload the truck, distribute the groceries, and help carry the bags to their vehicles.

Brother Ernie and Suzanne made a trip to Camp Hope for the Illinois Hispanic Convention. They were able to talk and visit with several in attendance. Brother Ernie also attended the pastor's breakfast held at the Ina FWB Church. They also enjoyed hearing Barry Simpson at a couple of the Camp Meeting services.

Our praise team sang at 'Church Night' at the Fairfield Fall Funfest. Several attended the grand opening of Eckelberry Barber Company at its new location in downtown Flora. Our own Nick and Rebecca Eckelberry are the owners.

Our 'Connect Youth' have begun their fall meetings after being off over the summer. They traveled to Centralia to C-Town Twist for miniature golf and refreshments. They had thirteen in attendance.

Recently when Brother Ernie was on vacation, Joseph Matthews filled the pulpit for the morning service. This is twice this summer that Joseph has preached for us.

We have begun our first ever church Pickleball Tournament. There will be doubles for women and men, as well as mixed doubles.



HAZEL DELL CHURCH

Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Diana Kirk

Hello, Fall! What a welcome season of the year! God's beauty and majesty is evident in the changing of the colors.

We assisted with the Five Loves distribution in August. Our ladies provided cakes. Others assisted with the packaging and delivery of the meals.

Our fall Revival Camp meeting was a huge success. It was held August 20-25. Guest preachers were: Brother Eddie Donelson, Brother Kenny Blumenstock, Brother Andy Lee, Brother Brad Ryan, Brother Kevin McNeely and Brother Robert Craig. Different groups were in charge of the music each night. Messages and music were great and blessings were many.

Brother Danny and Sister Diana Kirk's children hosted a 50th Anniversary for them at the church on September 3rd. We would like to thank all who remembered us in any way during this special time. We feel truly blessed with family, church and friends.

September and October are busy months for Hazel Dell. With Camp Hope services, church picnic, Church in Miner's Park and Homecoming, we stay busy.

Homecoming services this year will be on Sunday, October 1st beginning at 10:30 a.m. Brother Ernie Lewis will be preaching the message and Redemption will be providing the special music. A noon meal will be provided. Make plans to come out and join us for this special day, if possible.

Brother Justin Miller will be starting the Celebrate Recovery program in October. They will meet at the church each Thursday evening with a meal to begin at 6:00 p.m. and meeting to begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call Justin – (618)218-0620.

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." – 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Next month we hope to have a report and photos for the
Hispanic Conference held at Camp Hope
in September

DID YOU KNOW THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION MET IN MOUNT VERNON IN 1953?

My interest was sparked in Illinois Free Will Baptist history when six people, attending our Camp Meeting last month, were recognized as being present at our first camp in the summer of 1951. *(Pictured on Page 1)* At that time campers of all ages met for about 10 days and had youth camp as well as camp meeting services. In 1951 the Free Will Baptist Camp was located just West of Benton, Illinois where Illinois Route 14 and I-57 intersect *(Old campground is now occupied by Walmart, McDonald's, Wendys and other commercial buildings)*. Camp Hope, located in the Ewing, Illinois neighborhood replaced the old camp site in 1981.

The National Association of Free Will Baptists met in Mount Vernon in 1953. Lodging was in local homes and the Hotel Emerson. Attendance for the conference is not known because they did not begin keeping records until the next year.

Several important things took place at the Mount Vernon Conference:

The Co-Operative Plan of denominational giving was adopted and an Executive Secretary was elected. The General Board recommended and the body adopted the following items:

Item 1. "That an Executive Secretary be elected and that the Executive Committee be charged with the arranging of finances to support the office and setting forth the duties of the Executive Secretary..."

Item 3. "That a denominational budget be adopted based on the budgets of the various Boards or Departments of the National Association."

Item 4: "That the denominational budget be raised in a cooperative way, so far as possible, however, each department of work shall have the right to promote its own interests when the needs demand, while the Executive Secretary shall have the responsibility of promoting a Co-Operative Program."

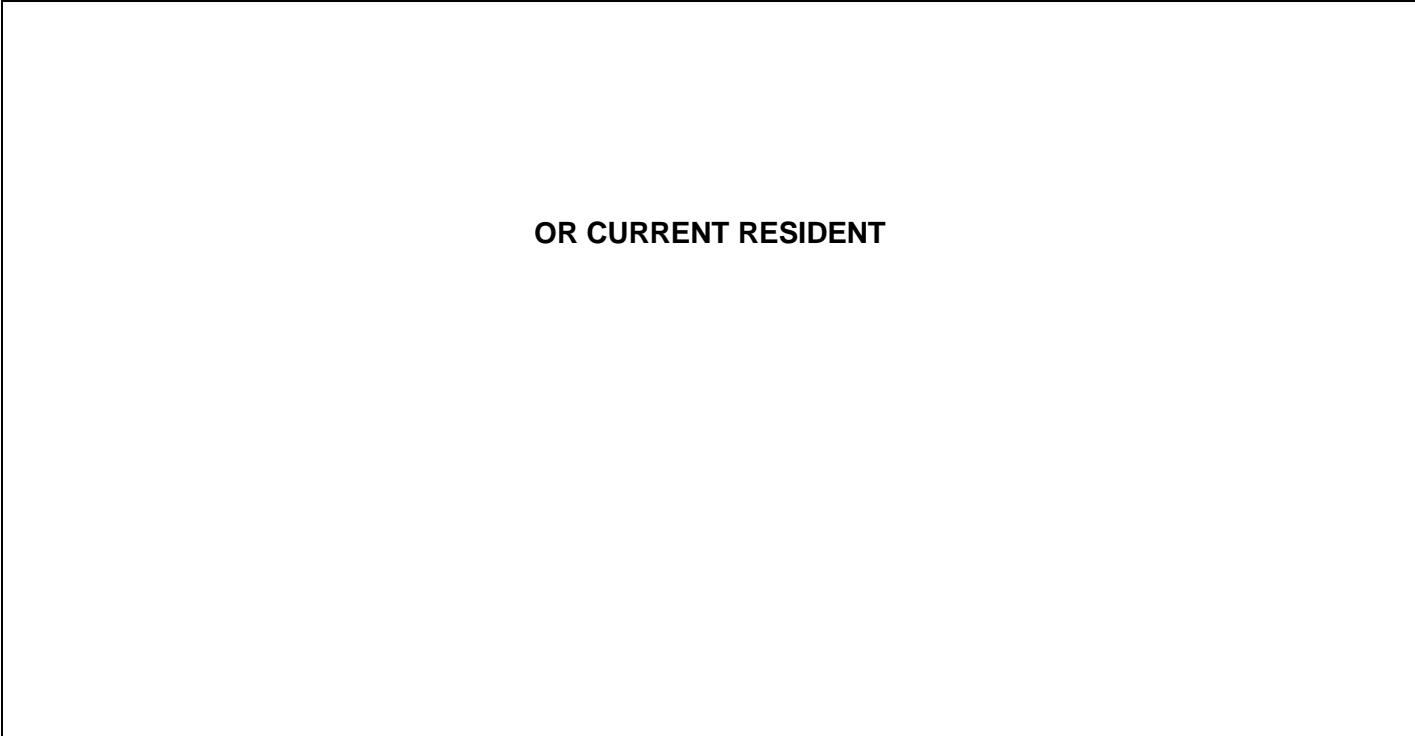
(These Items of Business copied from the book, "The Free Will Baptist Story" by Damon C. Dodd. 1956)

At the Mount Vernon Conference, the publication of a new denominational magazine, CONTACT was adopted.

The session in Mount Vernon also approved the purchase of a denominational headquarters building located in Nashville, Tennessee at 4801 Richland Avenue and authorized all departments to move into that building. That included the Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Woman's National Auxiliary and the Executive Department.



The 1953 conference in Mount Vernon used the Hotel Emerson as the "Headquarters Hotel". The business sessions were held in the High School Auditorium. Many Free Will Baptist homes were opened to the delegates who gladly accepted the hospitality of Illinois folks.



OR CURRENT RESIDENT

*Reporters: Please send all correspondence for the Illinois Newsletter to www.davidshores37@gmail.com
The deadline for articles for publication in the November Newsletter is October 15th*

2023 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The 2023 Leadership Conference, “Reclaiming Glory,” will be held December 4-5, at the Sonesta Nashville Airport. Mark Clifton is the keynote speaker. Mark is executive director of Church Replanting & Rural Strategy for the North American Mission Board of the SBC.

Registration is **\$250** per person and includes all conference materials and meals.

Rooms at the Sonesta are \$149/night (not including 15.25% sales tax and \$2.50 city tax). Overnight self-parking is \$10. There is no parking charge for day parking for locals attending the conference and not staying at the hotel.

