



Illinois Newsletter

April 2019

CHURCH REPORTS AND NEWS OF THE ILLINOIS STATE ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS



APRIL IS WORLD MISSIONS OFFERING MONTH
Support IM missionaries around the world with a special offering this month!

BEAR POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Larry Cook Reporter: Lana Travelstead-Eubanks

Dear Brothers and Sisters, This is truly the most difficult newsletter I have had to sit down to pen. The second weekend in March was historically filled with extreme highs and lows for Bear Point Church.

On Saturday, March the 9th, Brother Larry and Sister Linda Cook celebrated their 50th Golden Anniversary, given by their loving daughters Angie Edgmon and Emily Cook and family. It was a beautiful celebration with family, friends and the Bear Point Family. Brother Larry even gave an emotional, heartfelt account and testimony of how they met and how God had moved him to meet the love of his life. I am personally grateful for the beautiful example of marriage Brother Larry and Sister Linda have exhibited throughout the years. I have only ever heard them have words of praise, support, patience, understanding and unconditional love for one another. Just one of the many of the Lord's blessings he has given the Bear Point Family through the life of Brother Larry...leading not only by his pastoring and messages but by his example.

On Sunday, March the 10th, it is with deep sadness that I must report, after the morning worship service, Brother Larry announced his intent to retire after 36 years of Pastoring at Bear Point Church. I know this was not an easy decision for him to make. Brother Larry has a deep love for his congregation and especially for the Lord he has so faithfully served for many years. This is a time of great uncertainty, for both Brother Larry and Sister Linda as well as Bear Point Baptist Church. Isaiah 43:18-19 tells us, "¹⁸Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. ¹⁹Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." This, we shall put in God's hands. God has something wonderful and new in store for Brother Larry, a new change and a new adventure, just as He has for our Church and just as He has for the one He has already chosen to tend to this flock. God knows all of this and has a plan to be certain. Please keep Brother Larry, Sister Linda, and our Church in your prayers as we navigate through this uncertain time and ask God's direction with open hearts and open minds. Bear Point just wants Brother Larry and Sister Linda to know how much we love and appreciate all they have done for us over the years, and that we will always love and support them in whatever the new chapter in their lives takes them. We have been richly blessed! Brother Larry's official resignation letter will be submitted on March 31st and will end his service at Bear Point approximately at the end of May. "And His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"



Pastor and Mrs. Larry Cook



CELEBRATE EASTER, for **RISEN** from the dead and LIVES forever!

FIRST CHURCH - BENTON Pastor: Phillip Kennedy Reporter: Barbara Spencer

And the rains came - and came - came. Well, the sun will shine in God's own season. The Master's Men and Woman's Aux met again the first Saturday in March. The Women Active for Christ Loyal Worker's District met on March 9 at New Hope Church. It was a really blustery and rainy day, but the members present received a blessing. Sister Amy Johnson, our state secretary, was there to bring news of the upcoming state meeting in May which will be held at Salem. Our speaker for the day was Chris Corzine McCloskey a Christian psychologist and her testimony brought tears to every eye. Many are coming to the church every morning to walk the gym, then have coffee and visit. Anyone interested is welcome to come at 9 a.m. Children's Church has finished their first 20 boxes for Operation Christmas Child. There was a fantastic Valentine Supper this year and on March 17 a St. Patrick's Day meal time is scheduled for after evening church services. Brother Denzil Franklin is in Stonebridge Rehab Center in Benton and was improving after his stroke. Anyone wishing to send a card, his room is No. 7. Continue to keep him in your prayers as it is his right side that is affected. Continue to pray for those on our prayer list like Edith Taylor, Mary and George Bauer, Denzil and yours truly. I learned last fall that everyone needs rest and these are my verses (with a couple of my words added) "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls (*and body*). For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." - Matthew 11: 28 - 30

HAZEL DELL CHURCH Pastor: Larry Clyatt Reporter: Diana Kirk

Happy Spring everyone!

Our youth met at the church at 5:30 on January 27th for a time of devotion, games and food. There was a good number of young people who attended. Thank you to Jessalyn Eubanks, Rusty Miller and LeAnn Miller for organizing this event. Also, thank you for sharing pizza with the adults following our evening service. What a pleasant surprise! We enjoyed our time of food and fellowship.

There was a Church Wide Valentine Service and Fellowship on February 10th at 5:30 p.m. Devotion, food and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

On Sunday, February 17th, Rev. Clayton Hampton and family were with us during our evening service. He is a FWB North American Ministries church planter to Missoula, Montana. He shared his burden for the far west of our country. An offering was received following the service to assist their ministry.

The Peppy Calebs met for their monthly luncheon at the church on February 28th. There were 15 in attendance. Brother Jim and Sister Peg LeVault hosted. The next meeting is scheduled for March 28th at noon at the church.

The Masters Men group held their meeting on Sunday, March 3rd.

Brother Brian and Sister Lori Gibson shared the news that they are relocating to Nashville, TN. Brother Brian has already begun his new job and Sister Lori is finishing out her school year at Sesser-Valier. We are sad to lose this long time church family, but we are excited for them as they are moving closer to that new grandbaby.

Brother Tony and Sister Sherry Bulla's daughter Emily will be completing her training with the Illinois National Guard on March 15th and will be returning home.

Continue to remember our shut-ins in prayer : Wilma Cockrum, Helen Galloway, Gearald Hamilton, and Donna Rice.

"Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain." - James 5:7

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH Pastor: Ivan Ryan Reporter: Buddy Parks

Average Sunday School attendance during February was 89. Morning services were canceled on February 3 due to icy conditions. Neva Edwards, 78, passed away on January 31. Mark King shared about his work with ELIC during our evening worship service on February 3. Adam Brown brought the evening worship message on February 10. Some members attended the FCA Banquet at SIU. Clark Kellogg of CBS Sports was the keynote speaker. The Women Active for Christ Meeting was held on February 13. Clayton and Tammy Hampton were with us on February 17. They plan to plant a new church in Missoula, Montana along with their son Josh and his wife Kimberly. Our Valentine Banquet was held that evening. We viewed the film "I Can Only Imagine" and enjoyed a delicious spaghetti dinner from Fazoli's. Adam Brown has been teaching an Introduction to the Bible Class on Wednesday evenings.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." - Psalm 34:8

CONNECT CHURCH Pastor Dan Smith Reporter Shirley Brown

I'm sure all of us are really ready for Spring!! I have heard many folks say they just can't wait for an end to the cold temperatures, wind, rain, rain, rain, snow and ice – come on Spring!!!

As I checked the church and school calendars, I see we are going to be busy and the time changes on March 10th. It is not easy to catch up that lost hour of sleep. Anyway, February 27, we began the Spring Small Group studies on Wednesday evenings. March 1st begins our Fish Fry event; it runs until April 12 and is usually a very good fundraiser. Connect Christian School will hold a Spring Trivia Night on March 2nd – the theme is “Monopoly” and participants are encouraged to decorate their tables representing board games. These trivia nights are always a lot of fun, food and fellowship for all concerned. The school will hold the Art and Science Fair on March 8th.

The next Community Outreach event will be held on March 20. It is called “Stepping into Spring”. Members will walk around the Village of South Roxana and pray for the neighborhoods or individual homes or townspeople as the Spirit leads. I'm looking forward to this as a new experience and hoping people will ask what we are doing. April will be busy, too, with the school's annual BBQ event, high school banquet, Easter Sunday a 5,000 candy-filled egg hunt following morning services will take place. This is one of our most popular community events, and is usually very well attended. Until next time, be safe and God bless!

PITTSBURG CHURCH Pastors: Eddie Donelson and Keith McDannel Reporter: Heather Phillips

We are welcoming April with open arms here at Pittsburg! We are watching and waiting to see the Sonshine even more as spring is finally here! We are preparing for the Easter Egg Hunt for the kids of PFWBC and community. They always have a great time at this outreach! We love to see all those sweet, smiling faces. Last year the weather did not cooperate, so we are praying for clear skies and sunshine.

Resurrection Sunday is one of our favorite days here. We are looking forward to our SONrise Service at 6am and breakfast to follow. Praying for this time of celebration and that God would pour out His spirit upon these upcoming services. *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” - 1 Peter 1:3*

Next month we will host our bi-annual Church Closet Giveaway on Saturday, May 4, 7am-12p. If you have any questions about donations or know of any needs that we may be able to meet, feel free to call the church office at 618-982-2230. We will accept donations up until April 27. Please join us in praying for the hundreds of souls that may walk through the doors of God's house; that they would feel His presence and desire to come back and worship with us.

Praying that all of our sister churches have a blessed April!

BLUE POINT CHURCH Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis

Brother Ernie and Suzanne Lewis attended the Ignite the Flame Dinner held at the Ina Church in February. They were also able to attend the Bible Conference and Forum 19 at Welch College in Gallatin, Tennessee. They also attended a dedication service for the “Pave the Way” program and saw the nice brick walkway.

Our annual bowling trip was held after the Sunday evening service on the night before the President's Day holiday. A large group of teens, college students, and adults traveled to Salem, ate at McDonalds, and bowled a couple of games. On the first Wednesday night, our Connect Group for teens met at the Link, enjoyed a supper of sloppy joes, played a variety of games, and held a Bible study. We also hosted “Team Sunday” for all the Cisne High School basketball players, cheerleaders, and their coaches. Coach Kevin Bowen, one of our deacons, spoke a few words about the team and their season. We fed pizza, salad, and desserts to them and their families after the morning service.

Anna Beth and Savannah Endsley recently celebrated their first birthday at the Link. Harrison Walker held his Court of Honor to be an Eagle Scout at the church with a reception in the Link following the service.

We offer our sympathy to the family of Eileen Krutsinger who passed away at the end of February. Eileen was one of our oldest members. She had attended Blue Point and lived in this community for most of her ninety years.

CTS COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES AT INA CHURCH – Friday and Saturday, APRIL 26-27

ANNUAL YOUTH FISHING TOURNAMENT AT CAMP HOPE – Saturday Morning, May 4th



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OR CURRENT RESIDENT

*Note to Church Reporters: News items for the May issue of the Newsletter must be submitted by April 15th.
Please send all articles to davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org.*

OAK VALLEY CHURCH Pastor: Richard Brown Reporter: Marie Rutger

We are looking forward to spring as winter months have been hard on our church with those missing due to bad weather, colds and flu.

We have had several activities like Valentine party and enjoying all the times we get to attend services.

We took part in the Whirlwind Wednesday program in Cisne February 20th. We went to the Cisne Nursing home for service the first part of February and we go to Brookstone Estate the 4th Wednesday of each month. Three of our members live at Brookstone, Brother and Sister Elmo Manahan and Sister Neva Hilliard.

Alica Scarbrough made a decision for the Lord this last month.

We help with Hope Ministries food pantry give out commodities on the 3rd Saturday of each month to many families. We received a special offering for the Ignite the Flame which helps with scholarships for the students attending our Free Will Baptist College (Welch College) in Tennessee.

We are planning an Easter Sunrise Service on April 21st, and we are looking forward to the warmer weather.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." – Matthew 24:35

RESCUE CHURCH Pastor: Bryant Harris Reporter: Donna Harmon

Hello from Rescue. We are still here even though we had to cancel church a couple of times because of the weather. Everything has a purpose, so maybe this will make us stronger and more dedicated...and we can now watch the beauties of Spring unfold before our eyes!

In February, we had "Dessert Sunday", a fundraiser with all proceeds going to the Simmons family in Kenya. Then, On the 28th, the WAC met at the home of Jane Harmon.

In March, we had our Business Meeting, and the men resumed work on our new building which is located west of Ewing, Illinois. Two of our members have been hospitalized recently, but both Brother Ted Harmon and Sister Irma Lee Conner are doing better at the present time. On April 21st, our church will celebrate 119 years of ministry. The land for our present building was donated by Elijah Burton. We wish Brother Larry Cook and his wife, Linda, the very best on his retirement. What an awesome God we serve!

