



Newsletter

JOHNSTON CITY CHURCH

Pastor: Keith Fletcher Reporter: Reba Ritter

We had great services with the Peyton Sisters, October 24, as we celebrated Harvest Sunday and served the first meal in our freshly painted fellowship hall with a beautiful new floor. We so appreciate those outside our church who helped with this project: Redemption Church, Harmony FWB Church, and Harmony's women's group.

Several volunteers braved the cold and handed out over 500 treat bags with gospel tracts for children at the Trail of Treats in downtown Johnston City, October 31. We also gave away a family night gift basket that included games for all ages, a puzzle, popcorn, and gift cards for pizza and snacks. Our prayer team collected a record number of prayer requests and meet each Friday morning to pray for these and other needs in the community. We plan to set a up a booth downtown at Hometown Christmas, November 30 with our prayer box and give-aways. We will also host the JC Ministerial Alliance's Thanksgiving community service, Sunday evening, November 24.

Here is a poem from our reporter, Reba Ritter:

If you look for me at Christmas, you won't need a special star—
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem, I'm right there where you are.
You may not be aware of me amid the celebrations—
You'll have to look beyond the stores and all the decorations.
But if you take a moment from your list of things to do
and listen to your heart, you'll find I'm waiting there for you.
You're the one I want to be with. You're the reason that I came,
and you'll find me in the stillness as I'm whispering your name.

Love, Jesus

"He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation." - Psalm 24:4-5, ESV



RESCUE CHURCH

Pastor: Bryant Harris Reporter: Donna Harmon

In October we had a pastor from Cuba for our evening speaker. On October 3rd and October 20th, Sister Sarah Malone was the speaker for our morning services. We also had a "Dessert Sunday" in October with all the proceeds going to Dennis and Carol Teague, missionaries to France.

Time to move into November: Another get together took place at our new church which is under construction; we had a chili and hotdog cookout. Then, the next week we had ice on the pond, snow on the ground and black ice here and there – does this mean that Winter is already here? It is time to get out the coat, gloves and snow shovels!

Ms. Melinda's Tuesday School Christmas program is December 4th at 6:00 pm. Santa and Christmas dinner on the 15th and the children's Christmas program will be on the morning of the 22nd.

From Brother Bryant, here is a report on our new building: We are finishing the sheet rock on the walls, then we will finish the rest of the interior. We are waiting for the dirt work to be completed. Hopefully, we can finish by the end of the year, but we can't say for sure. It is time to wish everyone a very, Merry Christmas. May the Spirit of Christmas fill your heart with joy as we celebrate our Christ. *"What an awesome God we serve!"*



**Merry Christmas
from the
Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists**

FIRST CHURCH - DECATUR

Pastor: Stephen Cantrell Reporters: Donna Stephenson & Cathie DeCicco

We have updated our church building with fresh paint and trim, as well as moving walls to accommodate the growth in Terri Lindsey's (1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade) and Kay Penn's (4th, 5th, and 6th grade) classrooms. As a result, our Sunday School superintendent, Mike Stephenson, moved into a new office. Liz Lindsey used her talent to paint a Noah's ark mural on a wall of our new nursery. Pastor Stephen has a vision for a new meeting space and is currently using his talents to make it happen.

The pastor, deacons and general board are working together to update our current church constitution and bylaws. Their purpose is to make them clearer and to include a more detailed explanation of our faith and the purpose of our church. We concluded the month on the 24th with our annual Thanksgiving potluck after our morning church service. A blessed time of fellowship was enjoyed by all.

PITTSBURG CHURCH

Pastors: Eddie Donelson and Keith McDannel Reporter: Heather Phillips

December is already here, November flew by and **2020** is just around the corner!! Here are some updates on the events that occurred since the November newsletter...

On Sunday, October 27, during the morning service, we honored our Pastors and their families. The kids of PFWBC sang a few songs and we celebrated Pastor Eddie and Kristal, Pastor Keith and Kim and Youth Leader Kyle and Tonya. We are so appreciative and thankful for each of them!

Unfortunately, due to weather, our annual Fall Festival scheduled for the last weekend in October at Bandy's Pumpkin Patch was canceled. However, the weather cleared that Sunday evening and we were able to have our outdoor/bonfire service in our parking lot. It was a wonderful, spirit-filled service! Following the service, we had chili and hotdogs in the fellowship hall. It was a great evening!

Our Church Closet was held on Saturday, November 2. We gave away clothing, household items, toys and more. It is such a privilege to be able to provide this blessing to the surrounding community and we are so thankful God allows us to be a vessel and continue to reach those in the community who are in need of so much. We give **HIM** all the glory!!

We are currently in the process of collecting shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We will update next month on how many we were able to collect. This is such an awesome outreach and a wonderful way to get involved in International Missions. Last year we collected over 100 filled shoeboxes that were distributed to children across the globe.

On Saturday, December 7 from 9am-2pm, in our Life Center, we will host our fourth Christmas Bazaar. We have several business owners within PFWBC that will be setting up booths to sell their items. Join us for a fun day with good people, tasty treats, and a BIG variety of gift ideas to make your loved ones smile.

We pray everyone has a safe and healthy December, all while remembering the reason for this joyous time of the year...the birth of our Savior, Jesus!!

*“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel’ (which means ‘God with us’). - Matthew 1:23*

BRIDGE CHURCH

Pastor: Jamie Lee

October brought a very exciting month here in Champaign! Let's kick off the news of the baptisms that took place. Marcella is a part of our Celebrate Recovery team. Her baptism wasn't a new believer baptism, however, she wanted to make a new public profession of a renewed commitment to Christ. Caleb asked Jesus into his life in September. It was really awesome to see his teacher come to support him.

We started small groups that we call, "Launch Groups." I love the name because we are literally launching people into mission through our small groups. We have also introduced the H.E.A.R Journal method to get people into the Bible. It was in our plan to incorporate the international student ministry in 4 years. However, a door opened for us to start now. It was really awesome to see a total of six families take the step to invite the students into their lives. We had a first chili cook-off at the end of October. It was interesting to taste the different recipes. It was fun and memorable, memorable because one of our kiddos ran into a piece of pipe and drape, which caused about 100' domino effect. It was kind of like watching fireworks.

Where We Are Going: We spent much of our time in October building community within the Bridge Church. We focused on our people connecting with others and friendships are forming. There are several in our church who are really developing and preparing to be leaders, that in itself is so exciting. We are continuing to accomplish the mission God has given us, to lead people where they need to go! It is truly exciting.

HAZEL DELL CHURCH

Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Diana Kirk

Oh what a wonderful fall we are enjoying. God's masterpiece has been especially beautiful this year.

Our Fall Harvest Festival was held on October 26th at the church from 5:00-7:00 p.m. There were approximately 58 people in attendance. A devotion was given by Brother Mike Sample. There was a time of music, chili, roasting hot dogs, making s'mores, games and hayrides. So thankful to all who had a hand in making this an enjoyable evening.

Trunk or Treat was held on October 31st. in the Old High School Gym. Thank you to all who provided money or candy for this event, and thank you to those from our church who were on hand to pass out the treats.

The Men's Prayer Breakfast group met on November 3rd. Brother Rusty Miller gave a devotion. There were 7 men in attendance.

Brother Curtis was presented with a cash gift for Pastor appreciation on Sunday, November 10th. He was also given a maroon Sesser-Valier cap since he is officially an S-V "Red Devil".

Our church supplied pumpkin pies for the 5 Loaves Café Thanksgiving meal on Thursday, November 21st.

Sister Emilee and the youth are working on their Christmas presentation to be held on December 15th. There will be an adult Christmas Choral Presentation on December 22nd.

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.

We express our sympathy to the family of Brenda LeVault, who passed away on October 18th. She was the sister-in-law of Brother Dick LeVault and Brother Jim LeVault.

Also, we extend our sympathy to the family of Sister Wilma Cockrum who passed away on November 9th. Sister Wilma was a member of Hazel Dell since 1949.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." - John 15:13

FIRST CHURCH - BENTON

Pastor: Phillip Kennedy Reporter: Barbara Spencer

At the time I'm writing, I feel like someone made a mistake and we skipped fall. Leaves are definitely leaving the trees for a dormant time until they can spring forth again.

Many have been busy the past month. On October 19, Robert and Janice Page hosted the annual wiener roast and hay ride. Everyone has a good time of fellowship. On October 24, the men of the church fed Benton's football team and their coaches. One young man came back the following Sunday and we hope to see him again soon. On October 26 was the quarterly meeting at Harmony Church. Gail and Barbara Spencer and Don and Darline Zimmerman were the delegates. Those ladies of Harmony set a great meal. On October 31, our church held a Trunk or Treat and had about 200 visitors. They gave away a lot of treats and gospel tracts.

On November 3, the Wanda Mountain Boys brought a message in song for our Harvest Sunday. We always enjoy having them with us.

We lost our dear friend Johnnie Dallape recently. She' been a resident in a home in Eldorado.

Marci MacDonald and her children church have their 100 boxes ready for Operation Christmas Child. The children put in pictures of themselves. Last year was the first time the church had received a letter from one of the recipients. We always hear where the boxes went every year.

We ask for prayers for Norma Page who recently underwent surgery. There are many others on our list, among them Jerry Legendre and Denzel Franklin. Join with us in prayers for all on our list and yours.

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH

Pastor: Ivan Ryan Assistant Pastor: Adam Brown Reporter: Buddy Parks

Average Sunday School attendance during October was 91. Arnold View had a booth at the Blue's Junk Festival in Creal Springs. Bottled water and church flyers were distributed. Special thanks to Adam Brown and Mark Doss for leading this outreach. The Women Active for Christ Meeting was held on October 9. Wardena Furlow, 97, passed away on October 9. Russell Colson, 56, passed away on October 19. Condolences to these families. Our Fall Festival was held on October 18 at the home of Steve and Robbie Dwyer. Dale and Alyssa Harvey were with us on October 20. Alyssa shared about their work with ELIC. Justin Settle also shared his testimony that morning. Our shut-in service was held that afternoon at the home of Jim and Anna Jane Sanders. Seven from Arnold View attended the District Meeting at Harmony. There was a reception for Jake and Regan Burzynski on October 26. Our youth groups enjoyed an afternoon at the home of Josh and Jodie Tanner on October 27. Brother Adam Brown has been bringing messages from First John on Sunday evenings.

"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." - 1 John 3:11

newsletter

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*Merry
Christmas*

BLUE POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis

Blue Point surprised Brother Ernie with a pizza luncheon for the whole church for pastor appreciation month. Along with the pizza there was a large variety of side dishes and desserts. Brother Ernie was also presented with many cards and small gifts.

Former New York Met Darrell Strawberry recently held a revival at the Orchardville Church. Several of our teens and adults attended some of the services. Recently our Connect group of teens met at the Link where they were served a traditional Thanksgiving dinner family style on beautifully decorated tables.

The theme of this year's Trunk or Treat was "God Loves Me S'more than Anything". Christal Lewis gave a program for the young people. There many trunks set up in the parking lot where kids received candy and treats. Refreshments were available for everyone. Games were also set up for young people in the Link.

Travis Penn recently spoke about India at the International Night for the local Home Extension in Fairfield arranged by Marie Rutger. Brother Ernie and Suzanne were able to attend. Brother Ernie enjoyed a pastor's breakfast in Mt. Vernon this month. He and several members of the Mission Board and staff from the Bridge Church attended the Exponential Conference in Naperville.

OAK VALLEY CHURCH

Pastor: Richard Brown Reporter: Marie Rutger

Greeting this nice Fall weather with a little Winter mixed in already. We had a nice Harvest Party October 27th that included a hay ride, games, food and good fellowship with about 40 attending. We had Pastor Appreciation on October 17th giving Brother Richard and Sister Valerie a vacation to a resort neat French Lick, Indiana, along with a money tree for their expenses.

We honored our Veterans on November 10th along with our Thanksgiving meal, following our morning services.

We sent in our Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes on November 3rd.

We plan to take homemade cookies to several in our community near Christmas and our program is scheduled for December 22nd. **C.O.F.F.E.E. –Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere.**

