



ILLINOIS FREE WILL BAPTIST

JULY 2022

# NEWSLETTER

A monthly publication for Illinois Free Will Baptist families



“May we think of FREEDOM, not as the right to do as we please,  
but as the OPPORTUNITY to do what is right!” – Peter Marshall

----- Have a Happy Independence Day! -----

## PITTSBURG CHURCH

**Pastors: Eddie Donelson and Keith McDannel**

**Reporter: Heather Phillips**

July is such a great time of year...well, everything except the heat! The kiddos are in the middle of summer break, families are spending more time at the ball fields and summer vacations are underway. July is when we take time to celebrate our national freedoms and the birth of this great country, the greatest country in the world. We are incredibly blessed to live where we live. *God Bless America, Land That I Love.*

We know when it warms up outside, that must mean Vacation Bible School is quickly approaching! We are getting ready to open the doors for as many as the Father would send our way. PFWBC VBS is set for July 18-21. Vacation Bible School can be traced back to Hopedale, Illinois in 1894. Sunday school teacher D. T. Miles, who also was a public school teacher, felt she was limited by time constraints in teaching the Bible to children. So, she started a daily Bible school to teach children during the summer. The first Bible school enrolled forty students and lasted four weeks. A local school was used for classes, while an adjoining park was used for recess. While our VBS will last one week, we are excited and expecting a high energy, fast-paced week. We are asking God to change hearts, for we know that it all begins with God working and drawing hearts closer to him.

August will be here before we know it and the kids will be heading back to school. We are praying for the lives that will be touched because of the blessing God has bestowed upon us to share with the community. Every Sunday evening, at 5pm, we host a community prayer meeting in our Chapel. As a family of believers, we join and lift up the needs in the church and around the world, our nation and for lost souls. We believe that God is going to move in mighty ways! *Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* We pray everyone has a great month of July! **The HOPE is in you in 2022!**

## BENTON CHURCH

**Pastor: Phillip Kennedy**

Hope everyone is having a great summer. We finished up helping with the Good News Club in May at the end of the school year. We are planning a 5 day club in July. From July 18-22. We will start at 6p.m. and go till 7:30 p.m. (like VBS)

Our ladies began meeting again in May for a Ladies Fellowship and plan to meet the first Saturday of each month. Pastor Phillip Kennedy went to hear Ed and Rachel Goode speak at the Ina FWBC on May 22. Some from our church also went to see the Evangelists Drama team from Welch College at both Ina and Hazel Dell. On May 29 we had our A Day and B Day celebration and had a great meal we also recognized Britt Phillips for graduating from Kaskaskia College.

We have started helping to serve lunch to kids on Tuesdays at the ministerial alliance. Pastor Phillip attended the Pastors breakfast on June 6th. We have been down to clean, visit and help at Camp Hope some this Summer.

On June 12th we celebrated our 51st Homecoming. We had the Wanda Mountain Boys to sing and Pastor Phillip preached, with a great meal which followed.

We had our Fellowship with the Pastor on June 13th at 9A.M with Donuts. We have a busy summer ahead and are looking forward to reaching out to our community. Pray for us and we will pray for you as well.

## **MOUNT VERNON CHURCH**

**Pastor: Craig Smith Reporter: Linda Polston**

Sunday, June 5, 2022 found our members and guests gathered to praise God for giving us a joyful 92nd Homecoming. God sent sunshine in many ways, beginning at 9:30 am with the Wanda Mountain Boys bringing our Christian music entertainment.

Brother Mike Gillock, his wife Marsha and their son, Conner drove up from Tennessee so Brother Mike could bring his message about our journey to Heaven. Brother Mike served as our pastor from 2002 until 2005. Then he was called to Tennessee and we were fortunate to have Brother David Shores and his lovely wife Pat serve our church for the next 17 years, when he retired. Just recently this year, Assistant Pastor Craig Smith became our Pastor. He and Marcella moved right into our loving arms.

We have had many illnesses but are coming together and praying for strength as we continue our journey, taking as many as we can to Heaven with us.

Our church has meetings set for different groups. Masters Men meet the first Saturday of each month. They come together to help others, including moving some heavy furniture for me. We are blessed to be able to call on those who are stronger.

Our Women for Christ gather the third Wednesday. Currently they are putting together small gifts for the needy.

Usually, the first Sunday of each month our Golden Girls leave their decorating talents throughout the building. June 5 greeted us with beautiful blue flowers and ties attached to the bulletin boards to remember Fathers' Day. The ties were donated by the wife of a deacon who passed away recently.

*Dwight L. Moody said: "Faith makes all things possible... Love makes all things easy."*

## **ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH**

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

Average Sunday School attendance during May was 77. The WNAC State Meeting was held at Arnold View on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The main speaker was Rachel Goode. Many of our youth participated in the 2022 State CTS Competition at Ina.

Congratulations to our recent graduates: (Ky)- Henry Stokes and Ella Kate Brown. (8<sup>th</sup> Grade) – Ava Settle, Luci Dwyer, Allie Jane Dwyer, Ethan Harris and Brayden Hankey. (High School) – Chelsea Dalton and River Doss.

*"Commit thy works unto the LORD and thy thoughts shall be established." – Proverbs 16:3*

## **BLUE POINT CHURCH**

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis**

Shane and Joy Davison are back in the states. They joined us for a Sunday morning service and shared some greeting from France. They also attended two days of our Vacation Bible School. We appreciate Brother Ivan Ryan and Brother David Mishler who were able to fill the pulpit for Brother Ernie during his recent surgery.

Joel, Lydie, Eva, Alyssia, and Derek Teague were able to be with us on a Sunday evening. They shared about their ministry in France with both Joel and Lydie speaking. They also shared several slides. We had designated our 5th Sunday offering to go toward their missionary account.

We were blessed by a great crowd and beautiful weather for our Vacation Bible School, "Jerusalem Marketplace". Joy and Shane Davison were able to join us for two of the sessions and the week's offering went to their account. On the last day many enjoyed a family picnic with inflatables for the kids. Our sanctuary was full for the Sunday morning closing program.

Brother Ernie attended the June pastor's breakfast in Mt. Vernon. This breakfast is held the first Monday of every month. Hope Walker helped register all the students for Junior-Senior Camp. Hadley Walker attended the Leadership Camp. Our ladies prepared numerous cookies for lunch and supper on Tuesday, June 7th. Jimmy and Hope Walker and John Waller took all the cookies down and stayed for several hours to work in the kitchen.

## **RESCUE CHURCH**

**Pastor Bryant Harris Reporter Donna Harmon**

Hello from rescue, as I am preparing this for the quarterly reports, number one is to remember Brother Bryant. He took quite a fall off a roof. Spent a few days in St Louis and had a broken leg just under the knee. He has to stay down for 3 months. Prayers are needed. Brother Ryan Payne took care of Sunday for Brother Bryant. He did a very good service. His message was on Job. I went home and enjoyed reading Job again.

*"What an awesome God we serve!"*

## HARMONY CHURCH

Interim Pastor: Kent Dunford Reporter: Cody Alstat

Greetings from Harmony. Our Masters Men and Sisters of Strength met for their monthly meeting on May 10th, we had 21 in attendance. On May 29th we held a promotion Sunday for our Sunday school kids, we had several kids moving up to the next Sunday school class. Students from Sister Jennifer Mecham's class were Harper Britton and Caycen Cade. Students from Sister Sherry Steward's class were Bailey Malone, Elijah Diefenbach, Lucas Pohl, Anna Brumley. Student from Brother Cody's class was Jacee Meacham.

Also, on May 29th we had a graduation party for our grads of 2022. We had 5 grads from Pre-K & K: Lawcen Cabe, Caycen Cabe, Declan Gualandi, Harper Britton, and Lila Peppers. We had 1 grad from 8th grade: Noah Dodd. Lastly, we had 1 grad from college: Tahia Macias.

During our monthly board meeting we set up our pastor committee. Please keep the members of this committee in your prayers while we are in search for a pastor. We had Church in West Frankfort Park on June 12th, we want to thank everyone that helped with this and also Brother Dick for cooking the fish for the meal. After our service we had a surprise wedding renewal ceremony for Joe and Mary Hoggs who renewed their wedding vows for their 50th Anniversary which they celebrated on June 17th.

Please keep our upcoming VBS in your prayers, we will be holding it on July 11th – 15th.

*"The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him." Proverbs 23:24*



**DR ROGER BENNETT**

**Dr. Roger Bennett**, a dear friend to Illinois Free Will Baptists went to meet his Savior May 24, 2022. Roger was born in Ohio, graduated from Welch College and Bethany Divinity College and Seminary, married Maxine Conard in Illinois and served the Lord in various ministries in Alabama, Mississippi and Illinois. He loved the Lord, his family, and people. He also loved cars, guns, electric trains and children. Dr. Bennett was active in the U.S. Army, National Guard, Civil Air Patrol for many years. He loved attending Illinois Master's Men Retreats in Illinois and came every year with smiles, gifts and fun for everyone. Please pray for his wife Maxine, his daughter Beth Wilhite and husband, Chris and his grandson, Thomas Wilhite.

### A MESSAGE FROM INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

*The load is lighter when many people carry it.*

This year our annual **WORLD MISSIONS OFFERING WILL BE ON AUGUST 28**. We look forward to seeing how God will use churches across our denomination to supply the funds needed for ministries around the world. The WMO supports efforts like church planting, discipleship, leadership training, and so much more. General Director, Clint Morgan, says, "We want to lighten the load of carrying the Gospel as we work together with our partners around the world."

In July, each church will receive a packet filled with resources to help promote the WMO. If you want more information or need to order extra resources, please contact us at [kjohnson@iminc.org](mailto:kjohnson@iminc.org).

"Thank you for participating in the World Missions Offering this year. Your gifts will truly make an IMPact around the world," states Don Matchett, Director of Development. Give to the WMO to help carry the Gospel to those who desperately need it!

**A NOTE FROM SHANE AND JOY:** We are spending this summer in the States. Most of our time will be spent in Arkansas, Illinois, and Tennessee. We look forward to seeing many of you in our travels. We hope to keep our time in the States short simply because there is so much to do here in France. We want to get back ASAP and continue the work the Lord has called us to. We could not be in France without your continued love, prayers, and support. We want to thank you for partnering with us. Maybe we will see you soon! Press ON!! Shane and Joy

Illinois Free Will Baptist

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Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists  
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Happy Fourth of July!

*Note: All articles submitted for publication for the August edition of the Illinois Newsletter must be received by July 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Send all correspondence to: [davids@mvmfreewillbaptist.org](mailto:davids@mvmfreewillbaptist.org)*

