



ILLINOIS FREE WILL BAPTIST

March 2024

NEWSLETTER

A monthly publication for Illinois Free Will Baptist families



Honors for 46 Years of Service to Illinois Free Will Baptists *As Promotional Secretary* ***Bro Shores shares some perspective of his time in office***

My sincere thanks, love and appreciation to the Illinois State Association for the beautiful plaque and the gift card presented to me during the Thursday evening service at Victory Church on March 14th. I have always loved our Illinois churches and their willingness to love and give to denominational causes.

I also want to thank my wife, Pat and our family for never hindering me from doing this work. They had to spend many family gatherings without me because I was called somewhere to serve the churches.

Brother Ivan Ryan asked me to give a word to you all in this issue of our Newsletter since I have retired from the position of Promotional Secretary, a job I truly loved. Although I am a very private person and try to shun the spotlight, I will mention a few things as I reminisce.

Following Brother George Waggoner and Brother Gene Norris, I began as Promotional Secretary in 1978. At that time, we had a typewriter, a mimeograph machine and an addressing machine that used stamped aluminum plates for addresses. Most people do not even remember such equipment. It was a very slow process getting the Illinois Newsletter printed and mailed. Today we have computers, printers and addressing units that speed up the process.

Pat and I started visiting churches from the northern end of Illinois to the southern part of the state, from Rockford to Thebes. I would get off work on Friday evening and we drove to the various churches and came back usually late Sunday night or very early Monday morning. It was a blessed opportunity to visit the churches and get acquainted with people and their style of worship. It was also a special privilege to get to know the pastors and understand their heart; share their burdens and learn of their love for the people they served. I also discovered there were some men (not many) who were not in the spiritual condition to serve in ministry.

Although I had no executive powers, I was involved with helping settle church business conflicts, tried to help churches secure pastors, listen to complaints about leadership, and tried to look at conflicts as objectively as possible. In every case I told the parties involved I would also speak to people on both sides of the issue. . . . next page . . .

I think I have attended every state meeting since its inception in 1960 and I tried to stay quiet in our business sessions and I never felt I had to voice my opinion on the debate floor if someone else had already said what I thought was correct, unless I was asked to do so. Illinois has a unique organization by having boards which handle their own affairs. Our system functions well without conflict or competition.

There is great unity among our boards and concern for one another. I am happy to be a part of such a state meeting that in all things has tried to please the Lord with loving cooperation. Thank you, everyone for trying to serve the Lord in the unity of the Spirit!

May God bless our organization and be pleased with our service for Him. – David Shores

Bro Shores was a wonderful asset to the Executive Committee. I greatly enjoyed serving with him and appreciated his faithfulness. – Dr. Eddie Moody *Executive Secretary NAFWB*

Bro David gave me my first chance to serve in ministry. I will always be thankful for he did to make that possible. I have learned so much from him. – Rev Phillip Kennedy *Pastor Benton FWB Church*

I so appreciate him as my pastor at Bethel FWB. He has always been kind and faithful. . . almost as sweet as Pat.
–Rev John Hollis *Retired FWB Pastor and Church Planter*

Bro David and Sis Pat have always been big encouragements to me as I have worked at Camp Hope, as Youth Pastor at Ina, and as clerk for the State Association. He continues to be an example of faithfulness and godliness.
–Rev Jason Janus *Youth Pastor Ina FWB*

I have known Bro David since the early 60's and he was and is the best example of a pastor that I have known. I have tried, but not so well, to pattern my ministry after his. –Rev Larry Cook *Pastor New Hope*

Uncle David would take me all over Illinois on Sundays visiting FWB churches in the early 80's. I would help him drive but I learned so much as we just talked and experienced such different styles of ministry before I answered the call to be a preacher. I will always be grateful for those early trips except for the time we got lost on the south side of Chicago.
–Rev Terry Pierce *Nephew and Pastor Connect FWB Tupelo, MS*

I will always be thankful for Bro David's friendship and encouragement. I followed his pastorate at Ina and am very appreciative of his leadership.
–Rev Brad Ryan *Pastor Ina FWB*

Our church has always appreciated the ministry of Bro David. Each board has felt his encouragement and support. Suzanne and I have especially appreciated his friendship. –Rev Ernie Lewis *Pastor Blue Point*

Bro David was a pastor's pastor. You could always count on him for support, wise guidance and words of encouragement. His door was always open. A great friend. –Larry Clyatt *Retired Pastor, Florida*

Speaking for the State Association and myself we very much appreciate his ministry and over 40 years as Promotional Secretary. His wisdom and knowledge will be truly missed. –Rev Curtis Smith *Pastor Hazel Dell and State Moderator*

I am grateful for his steadfastness in seeking God's Kingdom first. I have seen the sacrifices made, and his willingness to be a peacemaker in conflict. –Dr. David L Burgess *Pastor Pleasant View and former State Moderator*

Brother David is still ministering even though not behind a pulpit. His words of wisdom and friendships will continue to speak Christ into the lives of many individuals as he continues his race. May God grant him many more years of service and Thank You for those served!
–Rev Craig Smith *Pastor Mt. Vernon*

Arnold View Church Pastor: Adam Brown Youth Leader: River Doss Reporter: Jodi Tanner

April...the month known for its showers, which lead to May's flowers. It seems this year the flowers arrived a bit early though. These flowers springing forth from winter's dormancy to life are a wonderful reminder of the beautiful life available through Christ our Savior. We finished March with our Resurrection celebration, which included activities for the youth, a sunrise service, a potluck breakfast, and worship service. The Good News Club resumed mid-March as well. We were blessed with both returning students and new faces as well. We have also been blessed with new faces in our morning worship services recently.

Some of our youth are preparing to be involved in the Illinois FWB CTS in April. It is always a blessing when people of all ages use gifts, talents, and abilities to serve the Lord and share the gospel. However, it's like having a glimpse of the future when the children are involved, which is really encouraging. As we go throughout this month, our desire is to share God's love with all those we encounter of all ages in deeds and words. Along with our prayer for opportunities to share His love, we also want to pray for the Settle family and extend our deepest sympathies to them. By their testimony, Justin and his family desire for God's glory to shine. As we go throughout this month and those to follow, let's desire to exalt our worthy Lord and give Him glory in all things.

"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created." Rev. 4:11

Blue Point Church Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis.

We hosted the Cisne High School FFA on a recent Sunday morning. They were in charge of much of our Sunday morning service. Afterwards we served a pizza lunch to these visitors and their families who were present. We held our Annual Teen Bowling trip to Salem after a recent Sunday night service. A Red Cross Blood Drive and a Senior Grocery Giveaway have both been held in the Link this past month.

The men are continuing their monthly Bible study using the book, 'The Men We Need', at the home of Daryl Hargrave. We recently held a special fellowship to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries during the months of January and February. Our annual volleyball tournament, "Battle of the Classes", has begun. All matches are held after our Sunday evening services.

Brother Ernie attended Forum 24 at Welch College in Gallatin, Tennessee. Ed Goode of the Bridge Church in Champaign was one of the speakers. Brother Ernie and Suzanne enjoyed attending the planning meeting for the Welch Ignite the Flame dinner. The food at the Bonnie Café at the Mt. Vernon airport was delicious.

Oak Valley Church Reporter: Marie Rutger

Spring is getting here and we are still looking for a minister. We have some filling in for us most Sundays and we are thankful for that. Brother David Shores and Sister Pat Shores have filled in for us as well as Zack Paul, Harry Thompson, Ethan Keyser, and we thank them. We pray the Lord will send us who He wants to serve us. We desire the prayers of all of you, and want you to come and visit us any Sunday morning you can.

We are all saddened to report the death of Spencer Meagher after a battle with cancer.

"Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust." - Psalm 16:1

Hazel Dell Church Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Diana Kirk

Spring is upon us with the wonderful sights and sounds that accompany it. What a wonderful time of year as we worship our risen Savior!

Our condolences to the Montgomery family. Bro. Don passed away on February 18th. following a lengthy illness. He will be missed.

On February 25th., Sis. Penny Wright joined into full membership with our church. What a blessing she is to us as we fellowship and worship together.

Eleven of our ladies attended the Sister's in Spirit Ladies Seminar at Grange Hall FWBC on March 2nd. The Master's men group met on March 10th. for their monthly time of breakfast, devotion and fellowship. Ten were present. Bro. Rusty Miller delivered the devotion. Bro. Mike Sample prepared the breakfast

"But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom 5:8

Harmony Church Interim Pastor: Kent Dunford Reporter: Alice Barron

On the 25th of February, Brother Ted Cunningham preached the morning message. Thank you so much Bro. Ted. Sunday evening we had Praise and Worship with testimonies, songs and poems led by Charlie Swann. Tim York met with us after the evening service to discuss our Pastor search. We realize that there are many churches in this same situation. Bro. Russell Hall is finishing up 2nd Samuel on Wednesday night Bible Study and is going to be teaching in Galatians. This will be an interesting study so if you have no plans on Wednesday evenings, come join us.

March 4th was the last skating night of the season with 16 skaters and about 10 watchers.

We are making plans for our Homecoming on May 5th. Brother Jack Harper will be bringing the morning message and the Victory Boys will be singing in the afternoon. There will also be a great meal following the message.

On March 10th, Brother Ivan Ryan was with us and preached the morning service. After that we had pizza and a birthday cake for Bro. Kent and Sister Tedra whose birthdays are on the same day.

Tuesday evening, March 12th, was our Master's Men and Sister's of Strength meeting with 12 attending.

“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Psalms 51:12

Ina Church Pastor: Brad Ryan Reporter: Katie Williams

March 2nd, Breana Wingo married Justin Lawson. It was a beautiful wedding and Happy Spring, everyone! It is so nice to see the sun shining and the plants waking up after the long winter. Hope you all are doing well!

Logan & Faith Payne welcomed a baby boy on February 17th. Owen Scott is the new little brother to Wesley. We are thankful for this sweet family. On we are so happy for them!

Some of us enjoyed hearing the Welch College choir at Calvary FWB church on March 6th. It was a special opportunity to hear our Jack Ryan, who is a member of the choir. On March 10th we had a guest speaker in our evening service, Mark Headrick of the Harvest FWB Child Care Ministries.

We are looking forward to our Palm Sunday choir production and celebrating Easter at the end of the month. He is risen, indeed!

JCity Church Pastor Randy Carney Reporter Doug Hancock

Spring has finally sprung in our area, and the folks at J-City Church had a busy March...shucks, every month is busy around here. Every Saturday night, we give away free meals; between 75-100, for the community, as well as deliver a few to shut-ins. Since our ministry involves prepared meals, we receive food donations from food pantries that cannot use perishable items...like frozen strawberries (in 2.5 lb pkgs)...or 250 bags (25 boxes of) of frozen peas. Any recipes??? An after school program known as the Good News Club has seen wonderful results as several children have accepted Jesus as their personal Savior. J-City has workers in the program and we all rejoice in the victories. # Pastor Carney and his wife Rhonda attended the state meeting March 14-15 and enjoyed both the preaching and business sessions. # Senior day, a time of fellowship, music and refreshments, has a growing number as the church ministers to the older generation. # Our church hosted a community Palm Sunday night service, sponsored by the JC ministerial alliance. Several churches attended and enjoyed the special music and the preaching from one of our local pastors. An offering was taken up to be donated to one of five ministries in town. # And finally, all Christendom celebrated Resurrection Sunday, and J-City rejoiced with special singing and music...plus a stirring message from Pastor Randy. The Lord is blessing our little church and attendance numbers are slowly climbing, with younger couples attending...with the hope of joining our congregation. Blessings to all our sister churches throughout the state.

Check Out Our Website for News & Announcements

ILfwb.org



Pittsburg Church Pastors: Eddie Donelson & Keith McDannel Recorder: Heather Phillips

Spring has definitely sprung here in Southern Illinois! Butterflies can be seen circling down in the wind and the birds are greeting the sunrise with a chorus of delight. Spring is such a glorious time. It is a time of rebirth, new beginnings, and fresh starts. It is a time of growth, a time of beauty, and most of all a time of life. Sam Churchill said, "Spring is the way you feel when you get up in the morning, the glint of sunlight on a windowsill, the underground noise robins hear as worms work their way below the surface of a lawn. Spring is a farmer sifting soil between his fingers. Spring is seed going into the ground; it is the laughter of children. It's when you say, 'Good morning,' and mean it. It's when God speaks and you can hear Him. Praise God for spring!" Next month we will host our bi-annual Church Closet Giveaway on Saturday, May 4, from 7am-noon. If you have any questions about donating items to the closet feel free to call the church office at 618-982-2230. All items are needed, but especially children's items. 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.

VBS preparations are now in full swing here at PFWBC. Our dates for VBS are July 15-19. The theme is Camp Firelight. A Summer Camp Adventure with God. PFWBC invites children on an exciting journey where they learn to trust God no matter what situation life brings, know God is always with them, and feel confident in sharing the good news of God's love through Jesus Christ. We can't wait to join first-time camp, Counselor Sam and Lu, the lightning bug, for a summer adventure at Camp Firelight. Campers accompany Counselor Sam and Lu during each assembly session and learn to face their fears while trusting in God. Each day, Campers see Counselor Sam face new challenges, from as simple as leading Campers on a hike to as intimidating as meeting a new and wise nature expert. With the help of Lu, the Lightning Bug, and the Camp Counselor Guidebook, Counselor Sam and the Campers explore timeless Bible stories showing how Old and New Testament Bible figures trusted God, faced their fears, and went on to do great things in God's name. As the Campers experience the stories through music, drama and storytelling, games, arts and crafts, science, and even snacks, they learn ways to connect with and trust God. And best of all, they understand they can connect with God at VBS, church, home, and every area of their lives. *Psalms 56:3 says, "Whenever I'm afraid, I put my trust in You."*

Pleasant View Church Pastor Dr David L Burgess



Bro David and Susan Burgess have tendered their resignation from The Pleasant View Church and Sunday, May 19 of this year will be this final day. The church will be hosting a lunch, cake and fellowship after the morning service. From 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm and we are all invited to come and show our appreciation to them as they have served the Lord for many years through our Free Will Baptist Churches, even serving as our Moderator for a number of years. Health concerns have become evident for both Susan and Bro David. In all likelihood they will make a transition to Indiana where their daughter and son-in-law, Wendy and Travis Penn live.

A Word From Mark King: Hello, friends!! We are settling back in to teaching after the new year holiday. My schedule is very light at the moment. I am only teaching 6 hours of pronunciation practice - my literature students are having a 6-week teaching internship at local middle schools, so I get a kind of break for now. Only trouble is, one of my classes starts at 7:15 am on Monday morning, and lasts until 10:00 am. Both the students and I are hardly awake at the beginning, and also at the end of the approx. 3 hours. I am in the process of hiring a Vietnamese language tutor to help me in my spare time, and also arranging a practice partner for English/Vietnamese exchange, so I am not completely idle. The weather here has NOT been my favorite - high in low sixties and almost no sunshine for the last month. But. Spring is coming soon, they say. My support account is amazingly healthy. Thank you so much for your generosity and concern. We think we are making progress here in this new school relationship, so remember that request. My support account is amazingly healthy.

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Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists
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Reporters, please note: Please send all correspondence for the Illinois Newsletter to www.iryman1970@gmail.com The deadline for the March Illinois Newsletter is April 15

From the Promotional Secretary:

The 64th Annual Meeting of the Illinois State Association is finished. Pastor Jon Cannon and all the folks at Victory Church did an outstanding job. They had a large group that kept the food area full of tasty treats from Thursday evening until the closing amen was given. They even had a group of men who provided a clean windshield for every guest on their spacious parking lot. Their campus is beautifully detailed with a scenic walking trail and a very nice play area for the children.

Our business started promptly at 6 pm. In addition to some of the reports and election of board members Moderator Curtis Smith recognized Bro David Shores for his many years of service to our state as the Promotional Secretary. Bro David reported that he began his duties in 1978. We were honored to hear Bro Jeff Nichols who will be the National Director of Child Evangelism Fellowship as of the end of this month. A number of our churches already conduct Bible Clubs so his message was especially timely for us.

The gavel sounded at 9 am on Friday morning with business and reports from our state boards as well as denominational departments sharing. We were blessed with great preaching throughout the day with the anointed messages by Pastors Sam Ramdial, Kevin McNeely and Paul Boyer.

We were adjourned after accepting the invitation of Pastor Adam Brown and the people of the Arnold View Free Will Baptist Church on March 20-21, 2025.

Special thanks to our church reporters for faithfully sending in your church news for our monthly Newsletter.

