ILFWB NEWSLETTER

June 2026

A monthly publication for Illinois Free Will Baptist Families

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Upcoming Events

Leadership Camp: May 29-30

Jr/Sr Camp: May31-June 5

Fresh/Soph Camp: June 7-12

Junior Camp: June 14-19

Primary Camp: June 21-25

National Convention: July 19-22

Find us on the web at www.ilfwb.org

Notes from the Promotional Director

As announced in the previous edition of the Illinois Free Will Baptist Newsletter, the Camp Hope Board has hired P.J. Kloster as the new Camp Caretaker in residence. The following is a letter that PJ and his wife, Molly, would like to share with the entire Illinois Free Will Baptist family:

Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to be the new caretakers of Camp Hope. This is a truly full-circle moment for us, as we have a long history with this camp. Both of us attended as campers from third and fourth grade all the way through our senior year of high school. We have also had the joy of serving as counselors every year we were eligible. Watching the children we counsel grow up with a good understanding of who Jesus is and a love for the Bible has been one of the greatest blessings of our lives.

We have a long-term vision for the camp, with plans to both maintain and expand it. We see the great potential that God has given our denomination through this camp, and we know that with faithful and prayerful work, it will continue to be used in mighty ways to further His Kingdom.

This camp has been crucial in shaping us as followers of Jesus, and we pray that our efforts as caretakers will continue the rich legacy of Camp Hope.

Sincerely,
P.J. and Molly Kloster

Please join us in praying for P.J. and Molly as they assume this majorly important role. We have no doubt that the Lord will equip them by His grace to do the work, and to do it well!

As this Newsletter is being compiled, we have been made aware of the passing of two veteran Illinois Free Will Baptist pastors: Bro. Bill Crank and Bro. Gene Norris. We will have a fuller article honoring these men and their service to our State Association in next month's edition, but we wish to express our condolences to the family at this time. Pray for God's peace, which surpasses all understanding, to guard their families' hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Arnold View **Pastor: Adam Brown**

May seemed to fly by! Ladies and graduates were honored during the month. We were blessed with some terrific guest speakers, Jack Ryan and Phillip Kennedy. At the end of the month, our youth led the service, which included some sharing their CTS entries with their home congregation. They've been busy lately designing an Arnold View shirt to help support their fund. Pastor Adam started a series of messages from the parables. Our Wednesday evening services had included a new study series through C. S. Lewis' book, The Screwtape Letters. The story involving a gradual turn to faith and redemption is encouraging, but convicting as well of subtle ways we can become corrupted.

As summer begins, we'll have some youth and adults attending church camp. Let's pray that these camp experiences will be opportunities to draw closer to Christ. In the month of June, we spend some time honoring both fathers and sons. We're so grateful for the love of fathers–especially our heavenly Father. The Mausey family will again host their block party & fireworks at the end of the month. Their hospitality and outreach to their community are certainly appreciated and enjoyed! We're working with the CEF to host a Bible Club in the Dippy Motsinger Memorial Park in Creal Springs. As we all work together to share His love and advance His kingdom, may the Lord continue to strengthen and inspire us and our fellow congregations. –*Jodie Tanner*

Bakerville **Pastor: Robert Craig**

May greetings from Bakerville FWB. May has really been busy for us. On Sunday afternoon May 3, our kids went to the Countryside Nursing Home to sing for the residences. It was a wonderful time. Everyone really enjoyed it. They want to know when we are coming back.

On Wednesday nights following our Bible trivia with Sis. Pat Little, our Pastor is teaching us from the book of Nehemiah. This last Wednesday night Bro. Bob Davis filled in for our Pastor while he was gone. Thank you, Bro. Bob. You did a wonderful job as usual.

May 10th was Mother's Day. We honored our 1st Lady, Sister Jo Ann Craig, with 2 dozen roses. We are so blessed to have her and Pastor Robert as our Shepherds. Each Mother present was honored with a beautiful carnation. A dozen roses was presented to the oldest Mother, Youngest Mother, Mother with the most children, and Mother with the most family present.

We were so blessed to see a soul saved this year, on Mother's Day. That's what it's all about! Seeing souls brought to Christ! Praise God!

Friday night, May 15th at 4:00 pm is our fish fry. The music started at 4:00 pm with food being served at 6:00 pm. Everyone was welcome. It was free. We had wonderful music, food and lots of great Christian fellowship.

Our REVIVAL starts Monday, May 18 at 7:00 pm nightly. We plan on going until Friday, May 22 unless God directs differently. Our evangelist is Bro. Jeff Owens from Stonefort General Baptist Church. We are really excited and looking forward to this time of worship. Mark your calendars and make plans to join us.

May 31st will be our monthly Congregation Night with plenty of singing and food and fellowship to follow. Please come join us. Everyone Welcome.

Until next month: "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all". –*Janice Daniels*

Benton **Pastor: Phillip Kennedy**

Summer break is here! We have had our final Student Hangouts before summer! James shared about E-TEAM and preached several Sunday nights at local FWB Churches! Pastor Phillip attended our Quarterly meeting hosted by Harmony. The Kennedy family attended the CTS competition at Ina! We had a wonderful Mother's Day service and gave out gifts to all the ladies!

We are saddened by the loss of Carol Edwards and our founding pastor Gene Norris. Please pray for their families.

We would like to congratulate Zebulon Leffler are getting his Master of Science in Atmospheric Science from the University of Alabama in Huntsville!

We are currently making plans for Homecoming and different Summer outreach events! Our Homecoming is going to be June 14th.

We are praying for Camp Hope and E-team specifically this month!

Blue Point **Pastor: Ernie Lewis**

We held another Senior Grocery Giveaway at the end of April. At the annual CTS Competition, Brother Ernie moderated the Bible and Suzanne judged the drama. A couple of our ladies were able to attend the State WAC Meeting at Rescue Church. They were blessed by speaker Sarah Malone. A few of our ladies were blessed to attend a couple of Christian concerts: Phil Wickham in Evansville and Danny Gokey in Mt. Vernon.

We would like to congratulate our graduates. Kate Endsley, Ethan Gill, Isaiah Anderson, and Duke Tannahill graduated from Cisne Middle School. Our graduates from Cisne High School were Emalie Matthews, Addisyn Hutchcraft, Rose Margentina, Noah Atkins, and Peyton Johnston. Our seniors finishing at Flora High School were Madison and Lane Britton. Levi Dunahee graduated from Flora Junior High.

We recently rejoiced as an entire family of six were led to the Lord by Brother Ernie. Brother Ernie is currently teaching a New Converts Class with thirteen students. Five people recently joined the church and became members. God has been working in the hearts of many of our people? –*Suzanne Lewis*

Crossroads **Pastor: Jeff Pope**

Greetings from Crossroads FWBC, the growing Church with a big heart for God.

Hope all the mothers had a great Mother's Day. Pastor honored the oldest mother, Melba Gillespie, with red roses. He also gave honorable mention to all the ladies who were not mothers. He presented all mother's with a pink pen . He is so thoughtful.

Praise the Lord our WNAC fundraiser that ended the 2nd week of May. We raised $1,317.25—the highest amount we've ever raised. Congratulations to the girls for winning. Dreyden Bartels got a pie in the face.

On May 2nd 4 women from our Church attended the WNAC state meeting in Ewing IL at Rescue FWBC. We all had a great time, Sarah Malone did a wonderful job speaking to us. Thanks to Rescue for hosting.

May 3rd was our Church Homecoming. Becky Lercher blessed us with her beautiful singing, Pastor preached, then we all enjoyed a good lunch and fellowship. Thanks to all the ladies who helped in the kitchen.

On May 17th we have two beautiful young ladies graduating from High School. Lindsey Pope and Kylee Dandurand, we are so proud of these young ladies.

Our pastor and his family is going on vacation after graduation. Bro. John Hollis will be preaching for us on the 24th, while they on vacation.

June 9th through the 13th we are having VBS the theme will be Emerald Crossing. The program will be Sunday morning on the 14th.

We have been studying the book of Revelation on Wednesday nights. We are learning a lot.

Please remember Mike Karnes, Jeff Deunk and Mike Crabtree in prayer, they have serious health issues.

I want to personally recognize 4 special ladies in our Church family Robin Crabtree, Mary Altgilbers, Kim Karnes, Cathy Bartels, they go above and beyond helping people. They show God's love by their actions. So greatful for them. All our Church is special. We have a great Church family. Praying for all our Missionaries and their families. Praying for our government as well. –*Tammy Boster*

Harmony **Pastor: Ben Eldridge**

The flowers are in bloom, the trees and grass are green. Isn't God great and treating us to His magnificent beauty? We were finally able to host the Quarterly Meeting on April 18th—thanks to all our sister churches who attended and filled us in on what is happening in their churches. We lost anther dear sister in Christ. Janet Purcell went to be with the Lord on April 18th. Janet had been attending Harmony for some time, and we are remembering her family in our prayers. She will be greatly missed.

Another friend, Veronica Woolard, also went to be with the Lord on April 30th, and we are praying for her family, too.

May started off with a bang. We celebrated our 194th Homecoming on the third with Bro. Ryan Spradlin preaching. After the service, we enjoyed a wonderful meal, followed in the afternoon by singing from many in the church. This is a new concept, and we'd like to thank all who took part in the service. We do want to think Jennifer and David Meacham who do a wonderful job of decorating for our special days. On Mother's Day, following Bro. Ben's message, the children of the church passed flower starts around to the mothers in attendance. Thanks to Jennifer for her help with the boys and girls. They did a wonderful job, and it was a blessing watching them.

Harmony is now preparing for our Church in the Park, which will be on June 14th at West Frankfort Park. We always have such a great time with a message, singing, food, and great fellowship. Thanks to Dick and Kathy Cremer for providing the fish. If you don't like fish, there is always lots of other food to eat. God is such a great provider.

Sister Sherry Steward once again took up a collection for Clarity, a program for mothers who want to keep their babies. This is such a worthy cause and Sherry has been supporting it for many years. *–Alice Barron*

Hazel Dell

Greetings from all of us at Hazel Dell! Trusting that you are all doing well and enjoying God's blessings of this beautiful spring.

Our VBS Committee has been busy planning and preparing for VBS. Tentatively, it is scheduled for Friday, July 17 and Saturday, July 18 from 6:00-8:30 pm, with the program on Sunday morning, July 19. More details to come.

The Master's Men group met for their monthly breakfast meeting on Sunday, May 10th. Bro. Rusty Miller delivered the devotion. Bro. Mike Faulkner and Bro. Dan Galloway prepared breakfast.

We had good attendance on Mother's Day. Thank you to Sister LeeAnn Miller for decorating and preparing a photo opportunity for Mother's Day. She also prepared gifts for the mothers. We appreciate all she does for the Lord.

Plans are being made to enter a float in the Sesser Homecoming Parade.

Please join us in prayer in our search for a new pastor. We know the Lord will provide the right man to lead our church. *–Diana Kirk*

Ina **Pastor: Brad Ryan**

Hello from Ina FWB! Hope you all are enjoying this beautiful spring season! We enjoyed hosting the IL State Meeting in March. It was a wonderful time of fellowship and encouragement, while conducting important business. The Youth Group was in charge of our Sunday night service on March 22nd. Hayden Bernard-Black did a great job preaching! Our choir performed the Palm Sunday program, "Believe", on March 29th. We are so thankful for those who take the time to practice and bless our congregation with musical celebration!

We enjoyed hosting the CTS Expo in April. It is always wonderful to see what all the kids have worked so hard at, and encourage them to use their talents for the Lord. On April 26th, Bro. PJ Kloster brought our evening message. Afterward we had a fellowship to say goodbye to Gineth & Cheryl Hudson, long-time members, who moved to the St. Louis area. They will be greatly missed.

Some of our ladies enjoyed attending the Illinois Free Will Baptist Women's Fellowship at Rescue church on May 2nd. On Mother's Day, we gave out our traditional flower gift to all ladies in attendance. We are always busy, and pray God blesses our efforts to bring more people to a saving knowledge of Him! *–Katie Williams*

JCity **Pastor: Randy Carney**

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven" (Eccl. 3:1). Here at JCity Church, we are in a season of change. Throughout the year, we enjoy cooking and serving meals for our community on Saturday evenings. Our children enjoy coming for Fourth Friday Fun nights once a month, and our adults meet monthly for Prime Timers. We enjoy all of those things one last time this month before summer begins.

Lunch Bunch is coming soon. Meetings have been had, the kitchen is being prepared, and volunteers are being organized. Starting June 1st, we begin cooking and going out into the community to serve lunch Monday through Friday. It takes a great deal of effort, dedication, and hard work by volunteers, not just from our church, but other churches in the community. Each one of them is a blessing to the Kingdom of God and the community.

Our Mother's Day service was extra special this year, as Pastor Randy and Rhonda's son, Rusty and his family were able to be here. They are missionaries in Japan and have lived there spreading the gospel for over 17 years. What a huge blessing for them to be home with their family for a time. Rusty led our Mother's Day service, sharing with us about the mothers in Japan and the way God works through them.

Though much is on pause for the season, May has kept us all busy in wonderful ways. We continue to do our Christian movie night once a month, with this month being *I Can Only Imagine 2*. Because of weather concerns, we had to reschedule our worship service at Bounce Back, but we made it the next week. We sang, we mingled, and Pastor Randy gave a short message of hope. The feedback we get from the residents there affirms the need for this ministry, and we pray God continues to work through us.

There is also a lot changing for our young people. We have seniors graduating and beginning adult life, and young men joining the military. Our church had the honor to again host the JCHS Senior Class Baccalaureate and a dinner honoring those in the military.

I would like to close by asking and encouraging you to keep our young people in your prayers. They are beginning adult life in a world that is changing fast. Please pray for guidance, protection, and especially for salvation. God bless you all. I will meet you here again next month. –*Shelly Palmer*

Mt. Vernon **Pastor: Craig Smith**

Our church family would like to thank the Victory Voices for generously giving their time to hold a benefit to help Bro. Craig and Sis. Marcella after a fire destroyed their home. Nearly 100 people representing many different churches filled the auditorium. The Holy Spirit walked among us during the singing and testimonies. Tears were shed and cheers given as this wonderful couple came forward. God bless the Victory Voices and each person who chose to make the evening possible!

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Department was thankful that our church family fed them a good meal—especially all the desserts.

All mothers were honored Sunday, May 10th with special songs and readings.

The WAC bake sale was a huge success! Thank you to Rural King who is always so helpful with this fundraiser.

Our monthly Jericho's Walk was held at our church on May 16. Always a blessing to meet with other churches!

As we pray for others, we can be assured that our Savior "is also interceding for us." –*Mary Ann Levitt*

Pittsburg **Pastor: Curtis Smith**

We recently wrapped up another wonderful AWANA year with our commencement ceremony and block party, and we also enjoyed celebrating our mothers and ladies during Mother's Day and our annual Women's Banquet. It was a sweet season filled with smiles, fellowship, laughter, and thankful hearts.

We are also looking forward to our annual Memorial Day Fish Fry on Sunday, May 24th. We are praying for a wonderful turnout!

Right now, excitement is building all around the church as preparations are underway for this year's SNOWBALL MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE! Vacation Bible School will take place July 13–17, and our decorating committee has already been hard at work transforming the church into a winter wonderland. We cannot wait to see the halls filled with children learning about Jesus and discovering how to "Find Your Strength in God." Please pray for our workers, the students, and for hearts to be touched throughout the week.

As summer begins, we pray everyone has a safe, joyful, and blessed season. We would also like to wish all fathers a very Happy Father's Day! –*Heather Phillips*

Illinois Free Will Baptist June 2026

NEWSLETTER

Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists
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