



Illinois Free Will Baptist

January 2017

# Newsletter

## BLUE POINT CHURCH – Rural Cisne

We recently held a baby dedication service for cousins Collins McGrew, daughter of Travis and Rachel and Bristol Pennington, daughter of Andrew and Jessica. Proud grandparents were Roger and Connie McGrew and Bob and Beth Hilliard. Great-grandparents are Robert and Marjorie Hilliard.

Our Wednesday youth program, S.W.A.G., has recently completed two service projects. On a Wednesday evening they helped sort and package goods at Hope Ministries, a food distribution center in Geff, Illinois. Then on a Saturday they worked for this ministry passing out groceries to over one hundred families. The younger S.W.A.G. students worked to sort donated groceries at the church for delivery.

Brother Ernie attended the Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. He and David Shores enjoyed riding down together and they also attended the Executive Committee meeting. Brother Ernie also joined the Illinois Board of Missions on a trip to Joliet. They met with an Hispanic seminary leader that is interested in opening a work in the former Immanuel Church property. Rick Bowling of North American Ministries also met with the group.

Our beautiful nativity is once again displayed in the Cisne Park. Many people from the church have been working on special Christmas mailings for the Marana, Arizona work of Josh and Ashley Bennett and for Shane and Joy Davison who minister in France.

The Kingdom Builders recently had their annual Christmas dinner. This year they had it catered in The Link.

Our Junior Church directors Bill and Christal Lewis recently held a “Junior Church Extravaganza”. They kept the children all day long. In the morning they made cookies, played games in The Link and made pizzas to enjoy for lunch. They went to the annual Christmas Parade in Fairfield and ate supper at McDonalds. Afterwards, they went skating at Singing Wheels Skateland. Many of the parents spent this time finishing their Christmas shopping. The kids had a great day.

Once again our church is the headquarters for the annual Ministerial Alliance Christmas Food Drive. Groceries are collected by community groups and churches. Various groups have been working to sort the groceries and package them into boxes. As the boxes are delivered to families in the community, a food voucher is also presented. Brother Ernie spent days covering northern Wayne County with these deliveries.

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis**

**Reporter: Suzanne Lewis**

## PLEASANT VIEW CHURCH – Rural Walnut Hill

In November, we celebrated Thanksgiving with the Calvary church. As always, they made us feel right at home. We enjoyed a good meal together and worshiped together. At Pleasant View later that week, we held a prayer service for missions. We received an offering for the Cuban Medical Team that will be serving in the Ivory Coast. The offering helped with the cost of their airfare. Also, our congregation collected food and non-perishables that we divided between two local families to help provide meals for them at Thanksgiving.

During Sunday morning services leading up to Christmas, we lit the candles of the Advent wreath and had scripture readings and songs that challenged us to watch for Christ in the Christmas season and to watch for His return to Earth. At the time of this newsletter entry, plans and preparations are being made for our annual Christmas breakfast and program, to be held December 18th. We hope you have a good New Year in 2017!

**Pastor: David Burgess**

**Reporter: Holly Hayes**

*Note to Church Reporters: Please send all articles for publication in the Illinois Newsletter by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month to: David Shores; 25 Edgewood Road; Mt. Vernon, IL 62864 – or by email to [davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org](mailto:davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org).*

## **PITTSBURG CHURCH - Pittsburg**

Welcome to 2017! Looking forward to a brand new year with unending potential to make our Lord known to those we are around and pray you are too! January tends to be our time of rest after the busy holiday season. It is a breather! We pray that ya'll had a very Merry Christmas and will have and continue to have a very Happy New Year ☺

Looking back... on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 3pm in the Life Center, a Spirit of the Season Christmas Bazaar was held. The booth rent was donated to the Youth Group as a fundraiser for their annual mission trip along with all the concession stand proceeds. There were a variety of small business owners from the church that participated in the day. There were quite a few people that took the time out to come and look around, do some shopping, fellowship, and support our Youth Group. It was a very enjoyable experience. ☺

On Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> during our PM Worship we had a Special Music Service. Five different churches were represented in the group that led us in worship. The group had sung together a week or so before (for the first time) at a local fundraiser and enjoyed playing together so much that they wanted to do it again. So the date was set, it all fell in place quickly, and they came! Our very own Matt Throgmorton, Jessica Lenon, and Alex Donelson were part of the group. Everyone did an excellent job and it sounded like they had been playing together for years!

We had our AWANA Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> in the evening. The clubbers got to enjoy pizza, sweet treats, games and lots of fellowship!

Our bi monthly Business Meeting was also that evening. All of our officers have been approved for the upcoming year! There are lots of changes happening at PFWBC, one of which is the church Secretary position. Hollie Utley will be taking this position and we are expecting her to excel in this new role!

Sanctuary progress report...the building is almost completely in the dry now! Work on the inside is about to begin, just in time for the cold winter blasts we are expected to receive. Things are moving along very quickly! Can't wait to start services soon ☺

**Pastor: Eddie Donelson    Pastor: Keith McDannel    Reporter: Christina Wilcox**

## **FIRST CHURCH – Johnston City**

I'm not quite up to "running in full gear," but I prayed and the Lord said just do the best you can in writing the church news for the Illinois Newsletter. So I said I'll do it! How thankful I was to leave both my week-long "visits" to the hospital.

The Randolph family, who previously served as reporter to the newsletter, has moved to Australia. They did a good job. I hear that they like it a lot down there. I'm sure it's quite a change. I wish them well.

The Community Thanksgiving Service was held at the First United Methodist Church in Johnston City, November 16. Methodist pastor Steve Hudspath brought the message on "The Vine and the Branches," and Brother Keith, who serves as treasurer, talked about the needs and work of the Johnston City Ministerial Alliance prior receiving the offering, which totaled \$245. A pie fellowship followed the service.

The four weeks before Christmas, Brother Keith preached a series of sermons on Isaiah 9:6, "His name shall be called wonderful counselor, mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace." They've been very interesting.

Keith and Sarah's daughter Hannah drove up from Nashville the weekend of December 11 to surprise her mother. What a wonderful surprise! She sat with me during worship service that Sunday. Roger Legendre sang, "Mary, Did You Know?" accompanying himself with his guitar. White Ash Free Will Baptist has a service at Integrity every Thursday at 2:00 pm. Four men play guitars and they call Roger to come almost every week with his guitar and harmonica. He accompanied Brother Andy Lee as he sang a Christmas song about reindeers that went over big time. I told Brother Andy I'm proud of him. He's lost 132 pounds!

We ended a recent Sunday morning service with a video, "There Are No Orphans of God." Two ladies sought the altar for prayer. We prayed after the service for Amy Williamson who was ill so that she would be able to rehearse her solo with the choir that afternoon and the Lord answered our prayers.

Our Christmas program for both adults and children was scheduled Sunday morning, December 18. We had a candlelight communion service on Christmas Eve at 5:00 and a family worship service on Christmas morning at 9:00.

Our church will host the South Central Quarterly Meeting, January 28. We invite everyone to join us. I'm sure we will have a wonderful service and meal together.

The best and biggest nativity has been set up on Marion Square. Praise our Lord! It's His birthday we're celebrating.  
*"The blessing of the Lord be upon you." -Psalm 129:8*

## **BEAR POINT CHURCH – Rural Sesser**

Happy New Year from Bear Point! Blessings to each one in 2017.

Our youth sold chili, hot dogs, nacho cheese and chips at the “Old Fashioned Christmas” in Sesser on Saturday December 3. They also had a float in the parade with several of our young people riding on it.

Brother Larry attended the Leadership Conference in Nashville on December 5-7.

The ladies Christmas party was held at the home of Bess Mygatt on December 6. All enjoyed a good time of fellowship, eating and exchanging gifts.

**Pastor: Larry Cook**

**Reporter: Linda Cook**

## **HAZEL DELL CHURCH - Rural Sesser**

Wishing a happy and blessed New Year to all of you. We trust that you had a Merry Christmas with family and friends and were able to celebrate the true meaning of the season.

Congratulations to Isaac Hicks and Kelsey Whitecotton who were united in marriage on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Praying for God’s blessings on this young couple as they begin their life together.

A Thanksgiving Offering was received on November 20<sup>th</sup> to benefit FWB North American Missions.

On Tuesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Ministerial Alliance sponsored a community service. This year the service was held at St. Mary’s Catholic Church and Brother Clyatt (being the New Kid in Town) was the speaker. There was a good number in attendance. It is so nice to be able to worship with others in the community.

Thank you to all who volunteered in decorating the church for the Holiday Season. It looks wonderful!

The Men’s Prayer Breakfast group met on December 4<sup>th</sup> for their monthly meeting.

We had a “Sweet” Christmas evening on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Brother Clyatt delivered a devotion on the 3 Boxes of Christmas. Following this, we enjoyed desserts, sweet treats, coffee, tea and soft drinks. It was an enjoyable evening of fellowship.

On December 13<sup>th</sup>, Brother Brian Lewis returned to Houston for a 6 month check up and was given good news. “No sign of tumor progression!” Praise the Lord for His Goodness!

*“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS:  
for he shall save his people from their sins.” - Matthew 1:21*

**Pastor: Larry Clyatt**

**Reporter: Diana Kirk**

## **NEW HOPE CHURCH – Rural Ina**

The W.A.C. enjoyed their annual Christmas party on December 4th. Food, games, and agift from our secret sister made the celebration complete. A Christmas card was signed by all in attendance and sent to Carol Teague.

On December 9th several people prepared a Christmas meal of ham and all the trimmings for the Lifeboat Alliance Shelter in Mt. Vernon. After the meal we went into the chapel and sang several songs with Brother Craig ending with a devotion.

Approximately twenty-five people went Christmas caroling on Sunday evening, December 11th. They went to three nursing homes, sang and passed out treat bags, and then went back to the church for their evening meal.

Two babies were born on December 5th to our congregation. Nora Adeline, daughter of Clifton and Sarah Richardson and Thyus Huck, whose parents are Robert and McClain Lea.

Our children participate in our morning worship service. They hold the flags and bible as we recite the pledges. They also take up the morning offering. Each Sunday at least two different children sing "Jesus Loves Me". There are other young girls who sing. Sometimes it is a solo, others a duet. We are so proud of our youth.

*"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me:  
for of such is the kingdom of heaven." - Matthew 19:14*

**Pastor: Craig Smith**

**Reporter: Jackie Capps**

# Illinois Free Will Baptist January 2017 Newsletter

Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists  
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**Bits and Pieces** – First Church of Mt. Vernon recently baptized 2 young men from Children’s Church and a young married man accepted Christ as Savior on a Sunday evening. We had our annual Christmas Program and the “To God Be The Glory” Band on December 18 and a Communion Service on Christmas morning.

Brother Harlan Johnson has been called to serve as Pastor at Calvary Church in Salem. He and his family moved to the community the last week of December. Welcome back to Illinois!

Alexander Church continues their search for a pastor.

## **ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH – Rural Creal Springs**

Average Sunday School attendance during November was 88. The Women Active for Christ meeting was held on November 9. Gloria Stokes, 87, passed away on November 11. Ruby Ponder, 96, passed away on November 27. Darryll Krumrey, 68, also died on November 27. Condolences to these families.

Caleb Gifford shared his testimony at our Veteran's Day Service. Our Annual Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 16. Brother Ben Taylor from Mt. Moriah Church gave a devotion. 136 Operation Christmas Child boxes were dedicated and delivered to the Cornerstone Church in Marion. Ava Settle was saved on December 4. Keith Orr shared about his recent medical mission trip to Haiti. Christian Skate Night was held on December 5 at Emery Brothers in Marion.

The Women's Christmas Party was held on December 6 at the home of Karen Jones. The 24 coats and 1 pair of mittens collected in our Winter Coat Drive were taken to a collection point at the Carrier Mills Municipal Building to be taken to Gatlinburg fire victims.

*"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." - 2 Thessalonians 3:18*

**Pastor: Ivan Ryan**

**Reporter: Buddy Parks**

