

# Illinois Free Will Newsletter October 2017

**BRIDGE CHURCH UPDATE - Champaign**  
Pastor: Jamie Lee



**A Pastor never gets to say, "I'm off duty!"  
Never gets to punch out at 5 pm. Never gets to have a normal schedule. We don't know how many sleepless nights he spends praying for his church. How much opposition he faces. How many family opportunities he misses because he is meeting with hurting people. We can't carry his burden for him, but we can do what the Bible tells us to: Pray for him. Encourage him. Support him. By blessing him we will be blessed in return. Remember your Pastor this month!**

We feel like we ended August very well. We continue to meet people on a regular basis. God continues to open doors. Last week I met with the principal and the social worker at Kenwood Elementary school where Jaden attends. They were really receptive to some ideas and I left really excited about our future partnership.

We discussed how the Bridge Church could serve their students and their staff. As far as the students, I will be working more with the social worker. She will be contacting me with students who might have a need of clothes and coats. As well as getting me a list of families who might struggle this Christmas. She said there are some families who even have a need of laundry detergent. We are planning to do a coat drive. If you have coats that will fit K - 5 and you need to get rid of them - please hold on to them and let me know.

The principal and I discussed providing lunch for the teachers as an appreciation for their hard work throughout the year. We discussed doing this once a quarter.

We would love to share this story with you. Heather took Jaden and Caleb to the ENT and they had to have a hearing test in August. Caleb was in the corner playing with a marble. He put it down, walked up to the audiologist, and began this conversation.

Caleb to the audiologist: "Do you know God?" Audiologist: "No. Do you?"

Caleb: "Yes." Audiologist: "How do you know God?"

Caleb: "I pray to him every day."

(Caleb goes back to the corner and plays with the marble).

Audiologist to Heather in shock: "I have been doing this for 30 years and no one has ever done that to me."

I thought it was interesting that Caleb went back and began to play with the marble again. There are many concepts to evangelism. Sometimes I think we complicate it. That day the seed was planted into the heart of the audiologist. We can truly learn from our children. *We are planning our first public event on September 17 followed by another even on October 7.* Please pray we make great connections at these events.

New Phone Number: 217-621-8203 or [www.gobridge.church](http://www.gobridge.church).  
Make Someday Today.



Eddie W. Hollis, 91, mother of Pastor John Hollis, passed away and went to be with the Lord on September 16, 2017, at her residence with her family by her side. Mrs. Hollis was very active in Illinois Free Will Baptists for many years: Past President of Illinois Woman's National Auxiliary, Past State President for the Women's Auxiliary for Missions, Dean for 25 years at our Illinois Youth Camp. She was a member of Bethel Free Will Baptist Church in South Roxana, now known as Connect Church, taught Sunday School for 30 years, active in VBS. She was active in calling people to invite them to church, and was just elected as Head Prayer Warrior. She served for many years on various church boards where she held nearly every office. Please pray for her family.

## **FIRST CHURCH – Benton**

**Pastor: Kent Dunford    Reporter: Barbara Spencer**

God's paintbrush is changing colors for this fall season. Praise Him that he makes our world a beautiful place even in this time of turmoil everywhere. Those attending the quarterly at Alexander Church were Gail and Barb Spencer, Kent and Tedra Dunford, and Donnie and Darline Zimmerman. It was a beautiful day and a beautiful service. The pastor from Olivet Church in Carbondale gave an outstanding message. The home of one of the neighbors near the church burned in July and we extended the opportunity for them to stay in the parsonage. Mr. Hogan was extremely ill and passed away at the Vet Hospital, so Mrs. Hogan is still with us while waiting for a new home. Pastor and Tedra enjoyed their first trip to Branson in August and she has since gone to visit her son in Nevada. We are proud of Norma Page for stepping up and representing the church during the summer making sack lunches for kids during the summer. We ask that you continue to remember Gary Cook in your prayers as he is mending and remember Mary who is in Heliacare. Our prayer list like the rest of you grows longer, so maybe you can just say remember the folks on Benton's prayer list. One we remember constantly is Grace Young in her battle against cancer. Some men of the church attended the steak supper again this year and thank the host church. Camp meeting was outstanding this year and the temperature was just right. At this writing, the men are attending the Master's Men retreat at Camp Hope. This particular week was a very busy one for all. God bless all of you and God Bless America.

## **BLUE POINT CHURCH - Cisne**

**Pastor: Ernie Lewis    Reporter Suzanne Lewis**

Congratulations to Norman and Shirley Workman on their 50th anniversary. Several from the church were able to attend their reception. A group from the church was able to attend a St. Louis Cardinals game. Unfortunately it ended in a loss. We enjoyed our 2nd Annual Fish Fry recently. A good crowd enjoyed the delicious fish, hush puppies, and chicken spearheaded by J. D. Williamson and Bryan and Wanda Peters.

Shane and Joy Davison have returned to France. We were able to send them back with a large suitcase full of food items that are not available there. We once again provided supper at the Johnsonville Grade School Open House. We cooked out hamburgers and hotdogs for the large group of family members that attended with their children. Recently our church has heard from speakers Karel Smith from Decatur, Bryan Peters from Cisne, and Roger Bennett from Mississippi.

Our S.W.A.G. program (Serving and Worshiping an Awesome God) has resumed. On Wednesday night we provide a meal for area young people; then they go to their various classes. In our adult Wednesday night Bible Study, the adults are learning about many core verses of scripture.

We offer our sympathy to the family of Marion Conard. A long-time member of our church, Marion passed away after a long battle with Parkinson's disease. Brother Ernie and David Shores preached at the service and we provided a meal for the family in the Link.

## **RESCUE CHURCH – Whittington**

**Pastor: Bryant Harris    Reporter: Donna Harmon**

Congratulations to all the children who attended Camp Hope. Congratulations to Daniel and Samantha Fairchild on their marriage June 16, 2017. Daniel is the son of Marilee and John Clark.

June events: Cookies were taken to Camp Hope and we helped with serving and cleanup. Matt Harmon led our services one night during the month.

July events included Hosting the District Meeting at our church, Vacation Bible School on July 21-22. We had 32-35 each evening, on Friday, we served pizza and on Saturday we had a cookout and the children made s'mores and hot dogs. Everyone had fun playing games and making crafts. Brother Walter Freeman preached on July 9 so that Brother Bryant and Sister Andrea could attend her parents' 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary celebration. WAC met at the home of Jane Harmon on July 27<sup>th</sup> with Marilee Clark, Anne Sinks, Katrina Beaty and her mother, and Cathy Lingle in attendance. Finally, on July 30 we had a cookout on our new church property with about 40 people enjoying good food and fellowship.

On August 6 Brother Walter Freeman again preached for us. We really appreciate him

Tuesday School began a new year on September 12 with Melinda Squires as our new Director. Todd Poe had surgery in August and needs our prayers for a speedy recovery. Our church lost a cherished lifetime member, Doris Douglas. She was a real joy. Our condolences to her family. She is now with her Lord and Savior. Paul Lingle is taking therapy and needs our prayers for a full recovery. *"What an awesome God we serve!"*

## **HARMONY CHURCH – West Frankfort**

**Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Jennifer Cook**

As the leaves begin to turn and fall to the ground, I can see God's hand bracing me for colder winds. Isn't it amazing and wondrous to see God's handiwork in the turning of the seasons, the falling rain, and even in the wind? What a mighty and awesome God we serve!

The week of August 21-25 brought revival to Harmony! The first two nights Brother David Ring shared his amazing testimony and showed us how God can use anyone to share His truth with the world. He also showed us that no matter what storms we are facing we are blessed! He encouraged us to always lift our hearts in praise, even in the midnight hour when we are broken. I can say Bro David's powerful message touched our hearts and drew us closer to the Savior! Brother Jim McComas delivered the message the next two nights, reminding us how amazing our God's amazing grace is! Finally Brother Tom Malone closed out the revival with a somber reminder to be watchful of the weight of sin and its hindrance in fulfilling God's purpose in our lives, but also to be vigilant and never quit testifying to God's truth and grace in our lives. What a powerful week of revival it was! Thank you to all those who came and supported the revival!

August 31, Harmony began a new bible study led by Brother Curtis called "Knowing Jesus" at 7pm.

September 3rd, Harmony had their birthday/anniversary meal after evening worship.

Sisters of Strength and Master's Men held their monthly meeting on September 5 at 6pm.

Please pray for these upcoming events, that God will prepare those who are stepping out to dedicate their lives to serving Christ Jesus: September 17th Harmony will hold a Baptism and evening service at Dick Smith's pond, beginning at 3pm. We have several brothers and sisters who will be baptized, Praise the LORD! Please pray for them as they take this next step in their journey with the Lord!

*"For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You." - Psalm 86:5*

## **PITTSBURG CHURCH**

**Pastor: Eddie Donelson Pastor: Keith McDannel Recorder: Hollie Utley**

Fall is on the horizon! Hope everyone had a good September and start to the school year! Recap of last month's events: The Community Block Party was a huge success! Tons of fun was had with all of the food, bounce houses, games, face painting and fellowship with the community! We are looking forward to next year!

Our AWANA program started back up on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and it was an awesome evening with over 100 Clubbers in attendance for the first night! We are expecting that number to grow as the year starts to progress. The classes will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00pm throughout the school year. The program is open to any child between 2 years through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Lots of helping hands and willing leaders make the program such a success! It's a great way to impact the youth in our area through God centered teaching and training in the Word.

A favorite time of the year for many at PFWBC is Pastor Appreciation Month. So many great opportunities to lift them up in prayer, fellowship with other brothers and sisters, and enjoy breaking bread with one another are being planned this month. Even though we appreciate them and thank God every day for our wonderful pastors, we enjoy spoiling them during the month of October! We are hosting our 110<sup>th</sup> Homecoming the first Sunday in October, with a fish fry meal and all of the 'fixings' to go along with it! Then, we will be having our Bi-Annual Blood Drive on Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-6:30pm. We will be taking appointments if anyone would like to come and donate. Walk-ins also welcome. Our Youth Group will be providing a meal from 4:30-6:30pm for fundraising purposes to support their annual mission trip. Everyone is welcome to come and join us! We will begin closing out the month with a full day of special tributes and worship to recognize our pastors and their families on October 22 and will end the month with our Family Fall Festival at Bandy's Pumpkin Patch, Sunday, October 29. We always love the Fall Festival Sunday, because we return that evening for an outdoor service around a bonfire here at the church! So much to look forward to this month! We pray everyone is enjoying the beautiful scenery only God could create! *"Making our faith seen in 2017!" - Matthew 5:16*



## **BEAR POINT ANNUAL COUNTRY STORE**

**November 4 9am to 2pm.**

Crafts, Fried Pies, Baked Items, Canned Items. Homemade Soup,  
Dessert and Drink for \$5.

Door Prize will be drawn for at end of event.

Proceeds go toward our mission projects.

## **CONNECT 2 MISSIONS – South Roxana**

**Reporter: Becky Goodman**

What a treat was the 1st Annual Ladies Retreat held at Lake Williamson Christian Center in Carlinville Illinois on August 25–26 2017. They were nearly 20 women from two different congregations attending this first event, and the consensus was that it is something we definitely want to repeat next year. There was talk of perhaps making it out two night event next year – we'll see how that goes.

This is the first time that some of these ladies have attended any retreat, so it was something new and most enjoyable. On Friday night, we arrived in time to get our room keys and go to the cafeteria for supper. Following the meal, we went to the Activities Center. The weather during the weekend was just right and most of the ladies went on a hayride (came back with hay on their clothes!) After the hayride, we enjoyed a bonfire complete with 'smares (yum) and some of the braver, younger ladies attempted the obstacle course. We stayed there remembering the good old days until the fire burn low and we were full of marshmallows graham crackers and chocolate. Following the bonfire, we split up - some going to the swimming pool or the hot tub, while others went to the café to wait until it opened at 9 PM. Around that time, the rest of the crew came into the café, wet clothes and all, We had such a great time, talking, telling stories and laughing over silly stuff.

On Saturday, we got serious and attended meetings in the morning and afternoon. In the morning, we were presented with stories and experiences of Cindy Warren, who with her husband, Phil was a missionary in the Philippine Islands. She told us a competitive the Filipino people are whenever they get together. They just make everything into a competition and have such fun doing it! We played a couple of games to break the ice and everyone had fun. Then we got serious again as Cindy related how the Christian colleges there are training pastors and other church leaders so they can evangelize the many islands that make up the Philippines. She showed slides of how the people plant and harvest rice (in the Philippines "rice is life" for sure). Cindy even got involved with the harvesting, which impressed the locals. That harvest was the first one that resulted in more rice than they could store! That was due to the generosity of American Christians helping to supply a thresher, a tiller and improving the irrigation system.

In the afternoon, we heard from Bailey Ochs, who recently returned from 11 months in China. Bailey also started off with a game, which told us how important communication is and how that not everyone thinks or feels the same as we do here in the States. It was wonderful to see someone so young willing to leave home, go to such a foreign culture and endeavored to bring the gospel to them. Bailey was a part of the ELIC, teaching English and interacting with college students in China. She made friends for life, and no doubt, planted seeds which others will harvest and eventually harvest.

All in all the retreat was well worth attending. We encourage many more ladies to join us next year.

## **NEW HOPE Church – Ina**

**Pastor: Craig Smith Reporter: Jackie Capps**

We have another new baby in our congregation who entered this world on August 28th named Charlotte "Lottie" McQuade Fowler. Her parents are Huston and Jordana Fowler.

On the 5th Sunday night in August, Pastor Amado, from Cuba, spoke to us through an interpreter. Aren't we glad for America! We can worship without fear of our church being destroyed.

The last insight for the summer was held at Camp Hope. After hot dogs hamburgers, etc., swimming and basketball was enjoyed. Please keep Brother Murrell Bernard in your prayers. He is recuperating from a stroke.

Some of our people were able to attend the Camp Hope Meeting.

*"...not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;" – Romans 12:11*

## **OAK VALLEY CHURCH - Geff**

**Pastor: Richard Brown**

Marie Rutger will be 85 years old on October 4. Her children are planning a birthday party/reception for her from 2-3pm, Sunday, October 8 at the Gathering on Highway 15, East of Boyleston or West of Fairfield. All are invited. Please: no gifts, but cards would be great. Marie's address is 1600 West Delaware, Apt # 25 Fairfield, IL.62837

## **HAZEL DELL CHURCH – Sesser**

**Pastor: Larry Clyatt   Reporter: Diana Kirk**

Happy fall everybody!!! Looking forward to enjoying all the blessings of this beautiful season.

Congratulations to Brother Jim and Sister Linda Robbins on the birth of their newest great grandchild. Ellie Harper Smith was born on August 16<sup>th</sup> and is the granddaughter of Rob and Bonita Robbins.

The Peppy Calebs met at Bennie's in Marion for their August outing. There were 14 present.

The Men's Prayer group met for breakfast and fellowship on September 3<sup>rd</sup> for their monthly meeting. Brother Rusty Miller delivered the devotion on "Ways of Showing God's Love to Others". The Men's group decided to send a donation to the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund. There were 12 men in attendance.

We extend our sympathy to Sandy Tennyson, Pat Sample and other family members of Will Tennyson who passed away on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

September 10<sup>th</sup> was Grandparents' Day. Brother Larry recognized all parents and grandparents.

We would like to thank Brother Harl Ray Lewis and Brother Brian Gibson for filling in for Brother Larry while he has been recuperating from his recent illness. We trust that Brother Larry will soon be feeling well again.

Our condolences to Brother Larry and family on the recent passing of his nephew. Pray for the family and friends who are dealing with the loss of their loved one.

Our Homecoming Services will be on October 8<sup>th</sup>. We would love to have you with us if you are able to attend. Services begin at 10:30. A noon meal will be served. Brother Rob Robbins, one of our own, will be returning to deliver the message. Special music will be provided by Steve Ladd. Please join us if you can for a great day of worship, fellowship and food.

*"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." - Colossians 3:17*

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

**Pastor: Ivan Ryan   Reporter: Buddy Parks**

Average Sunday School attendance during August was 80. A baby shower for Becky and Josh Orrill was held on August 5. Our WAC sponsored the Back to School Supply Project for students and teachers at Crab Orchard School. A Back to School Bonanza was held on August 9. Jim Haseker, 54, passed away on August 8. Condolences to his family. Braden Hankey was saved at 3rd/4th Grade Camp. The Women Active for Christ meeting was held on August 16. The WAC group helped organize the food pantry and soup kitchen shelves at the Marion Ministerial Alliance. A baby shower for Sarah and Tyson Faulkner was held on August 19. Brother Bob Thomas brought two inspiring messages on August 20. Norman and Joyce Owens celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary at our church on August 26. Congratulations to Alex and Julie Tecklenburg on the birth of Jonah on August 2. Congrats to Dylan and Sarah Pyron on the birth of Lincoln William on August 29. Noah and Keesha Thomas welcomed Watson James into their family on August 20. *"Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth." - Psalm 57:5*

## **WHAT TO DO WITH OLD SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE?**

Here is a suggestion by our Illinois Christian Education Board:

**Love Packages** - A ministry aimed at putting Christian literature and bibles into the hands of people around the world. Christians all across the USA - people just like you - send us bibles, Sunday School materials, books, etc. We send them to ministries in many poor countries to distribute freely to people hungry for the Word of God.

These are materials that would have sat collecting dust on shelves or been thrown away. Now it's being used to reach souls for Christ, encourage and build up the Church, and the raising up and training of leaders to shine the light in dark places.

Our Mission: Love Packages exists to glorify God through the distribution of the Word of God to hungry hearts throughout the world. That His Name would be made famous and that He would receive the reward for His suffering. He alone is worthy.

Love Packages - 220 Union St., Butler, IL 62015 ~ Phone: 217-532-6701 or [lovepackages.org](http://lovepackages.org)

Illinois Free Will Baptist October 2017

# Newsletter

Illinois State Association of Free Will Baptists  
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Note to Reporters: Please address all correspondence for the Illinois Newsletter to:  
David Shores 25 Edgewood Road Mount Vernon, Illinois 62864 or by e-mail to: [davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org](mailto:davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org).  
The deadline for articles for the November issue is October 15.

## **THANK YOU from BRIDGE BUILDERS for the CROSS**

We are very grateful for the generosity of our partners for over \$11,000 of donations to the Hurricane Harvey relief efforts in Texas. We want to bring you up to date on what has transpired and what has been done.

We have sent \$8,000 to our board member Robert Posner in Plano, Texas who is spear heading relief efforts among 4 Free Will Baptist Churches in Houston and Victoria, Texas. Monies have been sent to these churches advising them to restore their facilities, help their people and minister to the neighborhood in whatever manner needed.

This morning our partners with Arms of Compassion took our trailer with 1200 pounds of beans, rice and macaroni, adult and baby diapers, baby formula, school supplies, personal hygiene items and many more necessities. We purchased all of these items with your gracious gifts. This is a long term effort that will no doubt go on for weeks and months.

We will continue to keep our partners informed. However, do not hesitate to call my cell number below. God bless you all.

Gary C. Curry  
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Cell [580.320.1473](tel:580.320.1473)