



Newsletter

ILLINOIS STATE ASSOCIATION MEETS AT PEACE CHURCH Granite City, Illinois – March 15-17, 2018

Best Western Church Rate: \$65.99/first person in room;
4 Regency Parkway Plus \$20.00 for each additional person
Pontoon Beach, IL 62040
618-512-1314

LaQuinta They will only have 4 rooms available February-March.
14 Regency Parkway Fully booked with refinery workers.
Pontoon Beach, IL 62040
618-709-7933

Fairfield Inn
5224 Commerce Parkway
Pontoon Beach, IL 62040
618-709-7933

Days Inn
5105 Highway 111
Pontoon Beach, IL 62040
618-797-2727

Super 8 Church Rate: \$65.00
4141 Timberlake
Pontoon Beach, IL 62040
618-219-8112

The Illinois State Association does not reserve motel rooms during our State Meeting. You may call or go online and make your reservations at these recommended area motels

NEW YEAR’S MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR:

I am so excited to be sharing with you this month about our coming New Year as Free Will Baptists in the state of Illinois. We have some exciting things coming your way this year. The State Meeting this year will be at the Peace FWBC in Granite City, March 15-17, 2018. We will have some great speakers for whom I know God will use to minister to all who attend. Dr. Robert Picirilli will be the speaker on Thursday evening, Friday morning, and Friday evening. Br. Brad Ryan, pastor of Ina FWBC, will be the speaker during Saturday morning worship. You will not want to miss this year’s State Meeting. In addition to the State Meeting, we will also have our CTS Competition the last weekend of April at Ina FWBC. Please remember to pray for the young people that God uses during this time of year and also for the coaches who are the unsung heroes of CTS putting in countless hours of preparation. Youth Camps at Camp Hope will be upon us before we know it, so let’s make it a priority to pray for the camp directors, helpers, and especially the kids that will be attending. We will also have the WAC State Meeting, Adult Camp Meeting and Master’s Men’s Retreat again this year. A couple of items that are exciting this year is the church plants that prayerfully will begin to have services this year, those being the Bridge FWBC in Champaign and the Hispanic work in Joliet. Pray that God will begin to prepare the hearts of the ones who will come through the doors of those churches. One of my burdens the past few years is the struggling churches in our state. Whether we want to admit it or not, we have some churches that are close to closing are in need of help both spiritually and physically. You might be asking how can I help? The first thing that you can do is to pray specifically for those churches, their leaders, and the congregations of those churches to make the correct decisions ahead. Secondly, pray that God would send a true heaven sent, Holy Ghost filled revival to motivate them to do His will in their lives and churches. Finally, pray that God will raise leaders, deacons, and pastors from our ranks to fill the voids of leadership in our churches. I want us all together as Illinois Freewill Baptists to focus this year on Soul Winning. Without soul-winning all of our churches will die. Soul-winning takes work, it takes boldness, it takes dedication but without it we will not survive as Freewill Baptists. Why should I be encouraged to be a soul-winner? In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 we read the Apostle Paul writing to the church at Corinth and he tells them certain things that he hoped would encourage them to be soul winners. First, in verse 10 we read, *“For we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”* One day, we all will stand before Christ to give an account of what we have done in His service...continued on Page 2

I fear that many of us are in the "Secret Service," which means no one knows we are Christians. We should be living our lives "in the Name of Jesus." My life should be honorable to God and I should be a soul-winner knowing that one day I will appear before Christ, my judge. Second, in verse 11 we read, "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; . . .*" Contrary to popular worldly belief, hell is real!! I need to tell the lost today that hell is waiting on those who do not get saved. Hell will be filled with good people who never got saved and I should be doing my best to win souls to Jesus. Listen, loved ones go there, friends go there, our neighbors go there, our family goes there if I don't do my duty as being a soul-winner. Finally, verse 14 states, "*For the love of Christ constraineth us; . . .*" The amount of love that Christ has for us is immeasurable. The old hymn sings:

*Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parchment made
Were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above, would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky.
O Love of God, how rich and pure, how measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, the saints' and angels' song.*

With every breath we take, every step we take, every mile we drive, every place we go, we should be sharing the love that Christ has for us with a lost and dying world. Jesus Christ loved me so much that He gave His life to save me from my sins and friend that should encourage me to be a soul-winner. Let's make 2018 a year of soul winning in our state. God bless every one of you this year. -**Brother Curtis Smith**

WALTONVILLE CHURCH

Pastor: Harrell Hungate Reporter: Connie Spain

Greetings from Waltonville Free Will Baptist Church. Hope everyone had a great Christmas.

We were saddened by the loss of Sister Virginia Beckham. She was our Adult Sunday School teacher and also served as our Church Treasurer.

We had our Christmas party and gift exchange on Sunday, December 17th after our Morning Worship. It was enjoyed by all. *"The first birth is wonderful; the second birth is more wonderful!"*

RESCUE CHURCH

Pastor: Bryant Harris Reporter: Donna Harmon

We had a cookout and a fellowship at our new property recently, then on November 7th the Tuesday School children visited the Ewing Northern Fire Station. Later in the month we had a Thanksgiving dinner and Duane Sink took a meal to the homes of Jerry Barnfield and Ted Harmon.

In December we had Tuesday School Christmas Program, and our annual Christmas caroling at Helia, Heritage Woods and at the Dairy Queen, and our Church Christmas Program followed by a Christmas Dinner and gift exchange. We had a Christmas Eve service at 10 am and have planned a New Year's Eve service at 6 pm.

Our condolences to the family of Ivan Prior. Our church served a meal to his family. Pray for the following: Venita Kern, Marian Hughes (mother of Marilee Clark), Gracie Young, Cathy Lingle and Paul Lingle.

Thank you to those who donated toys to the Ministerial Alliance. Tuesday School resumes January 9th. Thanks to all who help make this ministry possible. (Ms Melinda: Keep up the good work!) *"What an awesome God we serve!"*

BEAR POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Larry Cook Reporter: Linda Cook

Happy New Year!

Our Country Store in November did very well! We raised over \$2300 to be used for our WAC mission projects. Thankful for each one who helped support this project.

Our prayers for the family of Georgia Olsen who was the mother of Helen Seigert and grandmother of Becky Loucks. She passed away on November 10.

Our ladies helped with the 5 loaves cafe which is held on the 3rd Thursday of each month. This is a free meal for anyone in the community.

Congratulations to Robin Payne and Chris Hottenson who were married on November 18.

Tyler Penn was in services with us on November 19. It is always good to hear how God is working in their ministry with International students.

Our ladies Christmas party was December 12 at the home of Linda Cook. All present had a good time of fellowship.

ILLINI INITIATIVE

International Student Pastor: Tyler Penn

We have had a great month with the students. This is such a fun time of year for us because we get to share our favorite things about the Christmas season with the students. The Bridge Church with the help of the Illinois Mission Board sponsored a thanksgiving meal for over 100 students at the English Corner. It was a great night of thanksgiving and great food. Kellie and I were able to host 10 students for thanksgiving. Kellie prepared a delicious thanksgiving feast, and some students brought other dishes like spicy fish soup. It was all very tasty. We also held our first ever Penn ping-pong Championship. Yi from China was the winner. The English Corner was able to take 30 students to a Christmas Play in Lincoln, IL. It was a great night of gospel conversations with a couple of students. I am hoping that both of them will join our bible study next semester or at least go to church with us. Our family held our annual Christmas Baking Day at our home with a dozen students. We love getting to share this Christmas experience with our students.

My favorite part about the Christmas season so far has been studying Luke 1 and 2 with our bible study. This is the first time they have really been taught about the birth of Jesus. I am so excited to sit down with 4 to 5 students every week and teach them the true meaning of Christmas.

Our family absolutely loves this time of year. The kids are having a great time getting in the Christmas spirit. We are so blessed. We are blessed to have so many people praying for us. We are so blessed to have so many people who support our ministry. We are blessed to play a role in making God's name great among the nations.

HAZEL DELL CHURCH

Pastor: Larry Clyatt Reporter: Diana Kirk

Praise the Lord for this wonderful time of year. Wishing all of you a happy and blessed Christmas and New Year!

We hosted The Annual Sesser-Valier Ministerial Alliance Community Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, November 21, 2017. It is such a blessing when community members can come together to worship and praise God. Rev. Curt Anselment, Pastor of Eternal Friends in Christ was the speaker for the evening. There were 75 in attendance.

The Men's Prayer Breakfast group met on Sunday, Dec. 3rd. for their monthly meeting. Bro. Brian Gibson delivered the message. There were 10 in attendance.

Thank you to those who decorated the church for the Christmas season. Everything looks beautiful.

Also, thank you to those who graciously contributed to the Sesser-Valier School's Student Assistance Project.

A Christmas fellowship was held on the evening of Dec. 10th. A devotion, food and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

Please join us in prayer remembering our shut-ins: Wilma Cockrum, Gearld Hamilton, and Frances McNeil.

Wishing all a very joyous holiday season!!

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." - Luke 2:11

PITTSBURG CHURCH

Pastors: Eddie Donelson and Keith McDannel Reporter: Hollie Utley

Greetings from Pittsburg! We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas season!

Looking back in December... The Christmas Craft Bazaar was a huge success. There were over 20 vendors over 180 shoppers that came. We were able to raise a good amount for the Youth Mission Trip Fund! On December 13, our kids in AWANA celebrated with pizza and a movie for their annual Christmas party! They were ready for their Christmas break to begin!!

As this is being written, we are preparing for the PFWBC Kid's Christmas program. The kids range in age from Birth -5th grade who will participate and show off their talents through song, instrument solos, choir singing, and scripture readings! This is always a favorite service of many! Also, we are hosting a Christmas lunch December 23, I will have an update on that event next month!

As the New Year is upon us, we see a new start and many opportunities to continue sharing the love of Christ and reach out to those around us. The calendar tends to slow down after the New Year here at PFWBC, but we are looking forward to planning ahead for 2018!

Praying God Gives You A Year of Favor...Full of His Unending LOVE in 2018

"And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us..." - Psalm 90:17a

HARMONY CHURCH

Pastor: Curtis Smith Reporter: Jennifer Cook

What a merciful, wonderful Savior we have in Jesus Christ! The Father loved us so much He sent His only Son down to earth to dwell with us, to be our example of perfect love and perfect sacrifice. To testify of His Truth and glorify His holy name! Let us praise the Lord this season for the most precious gift of His Son, Jesus Christ!

Harmony recently received two new members into its church family, James and Charla Krike. We are thankful for all they do in service to the Lord and the church! December 5th we held our annual Sisters of Strength Christmas party. It was a blessed evening in fellowship with one another. We are thankful for all of our sisters! The Master's Men held their Christmas celebration at Golden Corral. Thank you to all the men of the church who are serving Christ and the church through this ministry!

December 14th, Brother Curtis will begin a new Bible Study on Thursday nights, Crazy Love by Francis Chan. This is a very powerful study and we pray hearts and minds will be drawn closer to God through this study. Harmony's teens put on a Christmas play December 16th at 7 pm and December 17th at 6 pm. They have worked very hard to make this play possible. We are thankful for these young adults who love to serve the Lord!

On Christmas Eve, our Youth Christmas Program will be during the morning worship service. Please pray for our youth, that God will continue to strengthen them in their walk with the Lord! Congratulations to Brother Dave and Sister Jennifer Meacham. They recently welcomed a long awaited arrival to their family. They are the proud grandparents of Kyson Matthew Veatch born December 11th to Matt and Lindy Veatch! Congratulations! Harmony can't wait to meet you, Kyson!

December 31st, Harmony Church will host a Watch Night Service beginning at 8:30 pm through Midnight. We will have a short service with meal following. After fellowship, the Jearlds will provide the worship service and Brother Andy Lee will bring the message. Please join us in praying for the New Year approaching, that God will open hearts and minds throughout our communities and draw His people closer to Him!

"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21

NEW HOPE CHURCH

Pastor: Craig Smith Reporter: Jackie Capps

On October 29th, we had a surprise dinner after the Sunday morning service for our pastor and his family. They were given gift cards and other gifts. We really appreciate our pastor and his family.

Shoe boxes were filled and sent in November. Also, our veterans were asked to come up front and share with us what branch of service they were in. They were also given gift cards.

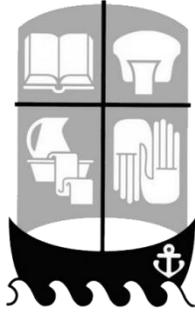
Our youth held a cookie walk and craft fundraiser recently. Over \$900.00 was raised. They gave half of the money to the Life Boat Homeless Shelter in Mt. Vernon. Most of our youth hasn't become teenagers yet, but they are willing to try new things. They iced cookies with chocolate, served soup, and etc. There was three teams. Each team had to price their donated crafts, arrange their cookies on trays, etc. Some of the children had to stand on chairs to help serve the food. We do appreciate Josh and Erica Capps and other helpers that work with our children!

May God bless our sister churches.

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH

Pastor: Ivan Ryan Reporter: Buddy Parks

Average Sunday School attendance during November was 85. The Lord's Supper was observed on November 5. Aaron Ferguson was baptized that day. The Women Active for Christ meeting was held on November 8. Chuck Mausey spoke at our Veterans Service on November 12. Gene and Mary Cobb joined our church that morning. Our Church Thanksgiving Dinner was that evening. Arnold View's Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 15. Brother Alan Summers shared a devotion. 121 shoeboxes were packed and delivered for Operation Christmas Child. The 60th wedding anniversary reception for Deon and Norma Bennett was held at our church on December 2. Some from our church participated in a church safety workshop at Zion United Church of Christ in Marion. Our church was a Christmas Village, with the beautiful tree, greenery, Nativity in the foyer, and the Christmas Card Mailbox. The Women's Christmas Party on December 5 was hosted by Karen Jones. Donations were collected for the Bill Pate family. *"They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." - Lamentations 3:23*



RANDALL HOUSE IS SEEKING A MOTIVATED PERSON

with sales experience to focus on outbound sales and acquisition of new accounts. This person must embody the character traits of Randall House, showing themselves to be passionate, selfless, hardworking, respectful, adaptable, and innovative. The position is full-time and offers competitive salary and benefits. Randall House provides a supportive environment where dedicated team members can use their gifts and talents in meaningful Christian service. Applicants should send a resume with references to: david.womack@randallhouse.com.

JOHNSTON CITY CHURCH

Pastor: Keith Fletcher Reporter: Reba Ritter

Our theme for the Christmas season was “Adore Him,” which was the topic of our pastor’s advent sermon series and our Christmas program scheduled December 17. Our adult choir (joined by our children’s ministry) prepared short musical entitled, “O Come, Let Us Adore Him.” A holiday luncheon of soup and sandwiches was to follow the service. The following Wednesday night some of our folks planned to go caroling.

On Christmas Eve, we announced two services, one at 10:30 am and the other at 5:00 pm. The evening service was to be a candlelight service with communion. Our plan was to end the year with our regular schedule of morning services, December 31. “Out with the old and in with the new” as our pastor planned to introduce our theme for 2018, “All Things New” based on Revelation 21:5.

Our people gave generously to our food drive supporting the Johnston City Ministerial Alliance’s annual Christmas basket project. Almost 70 families and individuals from Johnston City signed up for boxes of fresh food and non-perishables that were to be distributed December 16.

Our church planned to host Johnston City’s first Winter Vacation Bible School during Christmas break. Other churches helped us with this community outreach for children ages 3 to teen, scheduled December 27-29, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm.

On a personal note at the time of this writing, I was looking forward to the holiday festivities at Integrity Rehab including seeing Santa and Mrs. Claus, December 20, and our family dinner, December 21, when the Good Ole Boys from Johnston City were to provide entertainment.

“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”- 1 Peter 5:5

BLUE POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis

The Kingdom Builders Sunday school class held their annual Christmas Dinner in the Link. The meal was catered by the Skillet Fork Grill.

Junior Church has been practicing for their annual Christmas Program.

Plans are also underway for our Candlelight Service.

Our church is serving as the headquarters for the North Wayne Ministerial Alliance Christmas food drive. We have been collecting, sorting, boxing, and delivering a massive variety of canned and boxed goods donated by many in our community.

We are also preparing for two Christmas mailings for missionaries from our church: Shane and Joy Davison who serve in France and Josh and Ashley Bennett who are planting a church in Tifton, Georgia.

Earlier in December Brother Ernie attended the Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. During that time he also met with the Executive Committee to help plan the convention for 2018.

Blue Point set up a Nativity Scene in the Cisne Park with all the characters of the manger scene, along with a few animals. This display is in stark contrast to all the flashing lights and depictions of Santa Claus also in the city park.

Randall University student Jonathan Hill spoke at our church in a morning service to share about his summer mission trip. Jon plans to go to Bulgaria in June of 2018 and work with a CMP group among children and teens. We also have two students planning to travel with E-TEAM next summer. Ellie Hill will be on E-TEAM Nashville and Harrison Walker will be going with E-TEAM France.

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

*Note to Church Reporters: News items for the February issue of the Newsletter must be submitted by January 15th.
Send all correspondence to David Shores: davids@mvfreewillbaptist.org.*

Free Will Baptist Family Ministries, Inc.

90 Stanley Lane | Greeneville | TN | 37743

Let me begin by saying THANK YOU. I know those two words are said a lot through the Christmas Season. But, when we say thank you, this is what it means to us. It is meant for those who called, asking for the shoe & coat sizes of each child. It is meant for those pastors who are bringing their congregation and sharing the Christmas story with our kids. It is for those churches that are sponsoring our homes in both TN & AR, with gift cards, toys, & stocking stuffers. It is for those that helped cook a Christmas meal for the many families benefiting from the Hope Center. It is for our very own children in our care that made handmade ornaments and sang carols to the seniors at our Assisted Living Facilities. Again, to everyone who has opened their hearts to Family Ministries, who always make Christmas such a special time for our young people, WE THANK YOU!

We want to share a couple of exciting developments in progress. We are excited about expanding the ministry through our Foster Care Program in Tennessee. Everything about foster care is equal parts good and bad, joy and sorrow, beauty and brokenness. For a couple unable to conceive, Scotty & Jessica Jones prayerfully answered the call to become foster parents, allowing God to use them to invest in the lives of a sibling group of 3; Isabella, Gabriel & Chloe. The Jones' chose foster to adopt, and in January 2017, they began their 6 month journey to adoption, which became official August 2, 2017. What Satan intended for evil, God meant for good and now brokenness to beauty has become a part of all their stories. Since May 2017, 14 kids have been adopted into their foster families, finding forever homes for these precious children. We do believe moving forward in this direction is in the best interest for the future of Family Ministries. You may have also heard we are in the final phase of our fundraising effort for our proposed Maternity Home and appreciate those who have already financially committed to this project. I challenged our churches at the Tennessee State Meeting that if we had 100 of our churches to give \$1,000 for this worthy project, we could raise \$100,000, which would bring us much closer to our goal. Please prayerfully consider a special offering, mark your gifts "Maternity Home". In closing, again we say thank you. Most of all, we thank you God for the greatest gift of all—your darling Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Savior, our Shepherd, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!

