



Newsletter

FIRST CHURCH –MOUNT VERNON

Pastor: David Shores

Our church has been rather busy with Fall activities such as decorating the church and the church grounds. Pam Wooden keeps all the outside flowers, shrubs and rose bushes trimmed and groomed. The beautiful flowers enhance the beauty of the church. Then, Dianne Overton, Darleen Bradford and Starr Reed keep the interior of the church decorated with seasonal flowers and Ron and Mary Ann Levitt keep the bulletin board up to date. There are others who also work at keeping the building and yard looking good. Plans are being made for the “look of Christmas”.

Pastor David preached at the homecoming services for the Bakerville and Oak Valley Churches and in his absence, Ed Ferguson, Adrian Smith, Damian Rose, Michael Rose and Tommy Stief filled in for him on Sunday mornings. Our church attended the Southern Illinois Gospel Choir concert when it was held at the Park Avenue Baptist Church in Mount Vernon. We have a man, Carl Bradford who is a member of that choir.

Our WAC ladies meet on the second Wednesday morning of each month. They had a project to raise \$2,000 for missions which they exceeded by receiving donations and having fund raiser dinners. We are happy that they keep the need to help our missionaries before the church.

We recently had “The Faithful Sons” at our church for a gospel concert. Kent Waller, who now lives in Ohio, is a long-time friend of Brother David and Sister Pat. It was a really great day for all of us!

On November 4th, our church had Brother Matthew Gedeon, student at Welch College, as our morning preacher. He and four other young men came to Illinois that weekend and preached in some of our churches.

On November 11th, our church honored our veterans. Our parking lot and sidewalks were lined with American flags which were placed there by Dennis Shirley. We sang patriotic songs, recognized the veterans present in our service, and had a message on being good soldiers for Christ. To further honor the veterans, a donation in their name was sent to the Wounded Warriors Project. We are thankful for service rendered to give us our freedom.

The shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child were collected at the church under the supervision of Margaret Eyre and delivered to the distribution center. These little boxes will bring a lot of joy to children all over the world.

Then, on November 18th, we had another great service: Christy Stief was baptized, Tommy Stief preached, and we had a Communion Service. We are thankful to have a friendly, spiritual church to worship God and fellowship with His people.

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” – Luke 2:7



Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year

RESCUE CHURCH

Pastor: Bryant Harris Reporter: Donna Harmon

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at Rescue.

Our October events included our Tuesday School resuming on October 16 as the children and teachers returned to class making Miss Melinda a very busy teacher with events, including a hayride, planned for the children. The church also traveled to the Ewing School parking lot for a "Trunk or Treat" for the kids.

The WAC meeting was held at the home of Jane Harmon and the youth class washed down a house for a great lady, Ms. Irma Lee. On October 21, we had a cookout at our new church property, then on the 28th, the youth had an outing at Paducah Jump Park.

On November 11th, the church gathered together for Thanksgiving dinner.

Plans for December church activities include: Tuesday School Christmas Program on December 5th at 6:00 pm, Christmas program, dinner and gift exchange on December 16 and a night of caroling on the 20th.

Once again, it is the time to celebrate the birth of Christ and all that He has allowed us to have. As we journey through life with our families, we have so much to be thankful for. May you and your family cherish the wonderful memories of love, care and hope. Merry Christmas from all of us at Rescue. "What an awesome God we serve!"

JOHNSTON CITY CHURCH

Pastor: Keith Fletcher Reporter: Reba Ritter

In preparation for our church's public relaunch in the spring, dedicated volunteers continue taking the church outside the four walls of our building. Eight adults reached out to almost 300 families (all with one or more costume-clad kids) at our community's "Trail of Treats" downtown, October 30. We gave about 200 families a "Halloween Detox Kit" including treats for Mom and Dad, helpful parenting tips, and information about our church. Over 100 registered to win a \$100 gift bag with a Dominos Pizza gift card, Christian books, and CDs. For the event, Terry Starrick made an "old rugged box" to receive prayer requests. He, Deacon Doug Hancock, and our pastor invited parents and family members to fill out prayer cards to place in the box. Our men's prayer team meets Friday mornings at 7:00, and on November 2, they divided 20 prayer cards collected from the community and prayed for each one. The prayer box is now in our foyer to receive additional requests for our prayer team. We will have another outreach in downtown Johnston City at Hometown Christmas, Saturday afternoon, November 24. The kids will likely enjoy bags of cotton candy prepared in advance by Barb Buckner and our team of volunteers. Brother Keith is preparing 400 CDs with a short message and instrumental Christmas music. These will be part of the "Holiday Survival Kits" we'll give to families who stop by our booth. Carolyn Taylor and Reba Ritter attended the South Central District Meeting at Pittsburg Church and heard Phillip Kennedy, new pastor at Benton First Church, bring the message. Pastor Keith and his wife Sarah left early to "sneak away" to Tennessee, which they do quite often. Sarah's mother Janice Blades now needs a caregiver 24/7, and the Fletchers' three adult children and their spouses also live near Nashville. October 18, Brother Keith was honored to officiate the wedding of his second son Jesse Fletcher to Lillian Dinwiddie, who is an attorney and works as judge for TennCare (Tennessee's Medicaid program). Their daughter Hannah Fletcher-Page is expecting the Fletchers' first biological grandchild (a daughter to be named "Penelope Irene Page") in February. "Adopted" daughter Grace and her husband Suba's new baby boy, Alekai Liyo Saroba, was born in September. The Fletchers saw him (for the first time) and his proud big brother and sister, Isiah and Olivia, when they went down for the wedding. These trips are cut short by Keith's ministry responsibilities, and the fact that Sarah works four days a week in Eldorado at Egyptian Health Department as a mental health therapist and some Saturdays as a counselor at Caring Counseling Ministries in Marion. Brother John Murray, one of the "young" preachers from Welch College, spoke at our church Sunday morning, November 4. That evening, we invited the public to a prescreening of "An Extraordinary Life," a new biographical film about Billy Graham.

Reba writes, "October is over and November is running wild!" She remembers Pastor Keith's sermon from this time last year entitled, "Thanksgiving: The Forgotten Holiday" and has grown weary of all the Hallmark Christmas movies that are playing now. Not that she didn't enjoy dressing up as a pumpkin for Halloween and going to three parties including her 95th birthday party in October! She learned that Halloween began a religious holiday. "All Saints Day" (Nov. 1) was dedicated to the memory of both known and unknown believers who had gone on to heaven. "All Hallow's Eve" (Oct. 31) eventually became Halloween.

"When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and . . . a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' " —Matthew 3:16-17 (NKJV).

BAKERVILLE CHURCH

Pastor: David Mishler Reporter: Tammy Hendricks

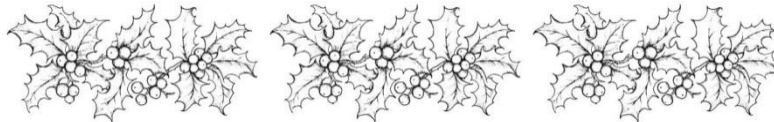
As we welcome fall at Bakerville Free Will Baptist Church we have been getting outside and taking in all the fun. Our youth planned and went to Marlowe's Pumpkin Patch and had a great fun filled Saturday. We planned a wiener roast for our October Congregation Night, but the weather did not prevail, so it was moved inside. But weather did not stop a great night of food and fellowship. The last Sunday Night Service of each month we have a Congregation Night where everyone gets to participate. We have some that sing, play a musical instrument, give us history lessons, read a poem, or just make us laugh in general. On November 11th we had our Thanksgiving Dinner with our Church Family which followed our regular Sunday morning service.

We would like to recognize these Bakerville Birthdays (Yes, they all got a year older):

October - Linda McMahon - Anne Brands - Sherry Beckham - Brylie Brands - Bill Beckham - Jesse Beever - Sue Beaty - Roger Mifflin. November - Melvin Cochrane - Tammy Hendricks - Phyllis Kash

There is a Community Choir that a few of Bakerville FWB members take part in and will be performing a Christmas Cantata at the Sesser Opera House on December 2, 2018 at 2 p.m. We would like to extend an invitation for everyone to attend - Admission is free (of course).

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." - Ecclesiastes 3:1



BEAR POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Larry Cook Reporter: Lana Travelstead-Eubanks

Merry Christmas, Joyeux Noel, Frihe Weihnachten, Feliz Navidad, Meri-Kurisumasu, Buon Natale, Mo'Adim Lesimkha, Ubene Krisme-Siemnandi and Mele Kalikimaka! ☺ No matter how you say it or where you live, people all over the world are rejoicing and celebrating our Saviour's birth. With all the noise of negativity in the world and even in our own country, with our own issues and divisiveness, it is sometimes hard to hear it. It reminds me of one of my favorite Christmas songs, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day", in it, the author laments, "And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said, "For hate is strong and mocks the song Of peace on earth, good will to men", these times can be discouraging. So many bad things happening, whether natural or caused by man. But I have found, if you look hard enough and listen long enough, that there are good news stories, good people, stories of kindness and true charity and love, although these stories don't seem to make it on the front page or "at the top of the hour". But then the song continues..."Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth he sleep, The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, With peace on earth, good will to men" Praise God this is true! When evil seems to be all around, sometimes our best ability to witness is just to be kind, charitable and loving to others, especially to strangers while spreading the 2000 year old news headline, "A Child, a King, A Saviour is born!"

November saw a month of several blessings to be thankful for. Once again, November 3rd was our Annual Country Store. This yearly event always does well and raises money for our missionaries that is greatly needed and we thank all that helped, participated and purchased to make it so successful and I know our Missionaries are grateful also. November 9th, our youth attended Judgement House at the Dorrisville Baptist Church, something they always look forward to every fall season. They also did an outstanding job leading the morning Church services on the 11th, along with their monthly bake sale. Also, on the 11th, we honored our Veterans with a video of military pictures set to music of our Vets both past and present. "All gave some, and some gave all," **All** veterans, no matter what their role or rank, put their lives on the line when they volunteered to wear the uniform. The words "Thank you" never seems like enough but our Bear Point family is truly grateful to all of our Vets, their families and their service. Let us continue to pray for our country, its' guidance and for those currently serving to do God's will and safe return.

Our Christmas Program will be at 6:00 PM on December 16th, This is always so much fun and the kids love putting it on as well as a great time of fellowship following the program. Please make plans to attend and get a true Christmas blessing. Everyone at Bear Point would like to wish you a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

HAZEL DELL CHURCH

Pastor: Larry Clyatt Reporter: Diana Kirk

From fall right into winter!! How beautiful the snow is as I write this newsletter this morning!!!!

A special thank you to Amy Galloway for the beautiful decorations in the fellowship hall. She always does an exceptional job!

A group of 10 Peppy Calebs met at The Red Onion for their October luncheon. A great time was had by all.

Thank you to all who contributed candy or money to assist with the community Trunk or Treat which was held at Miner's Memorial Park.

Several from our church attended the Southern Illinois Homecoming Gospel Choir presentation at the Benton Civic Center on October 28th.

Congratulations to Jeremy and Jennifer (Gibson) Delaneuville, on the birth of their son, Oliver James. He arrived on October 18th. Also, congratulations to proud grandparents, Brian and Lori Gibson!

Brother Jonathan Reed, a Welch College Ministerial Student was with us as a guest speaker on Sunday, November 4th. The men's prayer breakfast group met on the 4th also. There were 10 men in attendance. Brother Rusty Miller delivered the devotion.

Brother Larry recognized the Veterans who were present on November 11th. Thank you to Brother Denny Dial and Brother Dean Galloway, as well as all other Veterans, for your service to our great country.

Please remember our shut-ins in prayer: Wilma Cockrum, Helen Galloway, Gearald Hamilton, Francis McNeil, and Donna Rice. Also, keep Brother Bob Harrison in your prayers as he is recovering from his recent surgery.

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." - Psalm 100:4

BENTON – FIRST CHURCH

Pastor: Phillip Kennedy Reporter: Barbara Spencer

What a mixed up bout of weather we've had this fall. The leaves changed from green to brown too fast. God's paintbrush really puts glory in the sight. On October 27, First Free Will participated in the Trick or Treat on the Square in Benton. This kept kids off the street and the chance of getting hurt.

On November 4, which was my first Sunday in several weeks to be able to attend church, I felt so welcome and felt like Josh and James sang their special to welcome me back. I want to thank all for the prayers. I know our ministers are busy, but the residents of the nursing homes and skilled care welcome their visits. I could hear the bible studies and oh, the music from my room. One lady used to say John 3:16 every time she walked past but she never finished it. They were singing (for me maybe) the day I got to come home.

November 4 was also our fall lunch after church. What good food! We had a true "celebration" on November 11. The patriotic music always makes me cry a little - and then all the veterans stood. Alisa Leffler decorated the church and she along with Zeb and Delaney provided the special singing. I love the beautiful big flag that was hung behind the choir. Mrs. Marcy and the children sent off 80 shoe boxes this year. She showed the congregation what she packed inside a girls box. Amazing how she gets it all in there.

Mrs. Jackie gave a mission talk about Eddy and Amanda Simmons in Kenya. Special messages were played from each of them about their work with the Samburu people. Brother Phillip and Sister Jackie are meeting with kids in a program at school. Masters Men and WNAC met as usual the first of the month. Those needing prayer are Edith Taylor, Mary and Gary Cook and many others. Maybe we can just say God bless and take care of those on everyone's prayer list.



Welch College is planning the Illinois Ignite the Flame pastors and wives orientation dinner at Ryan's in Mount Vernon on Monday, January 21, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

Also, the Ignite the Flame dinner is planned for Saturday, February 16, 2019 at the Ina Church at 6:00 pm.

Posters and mailings will be sent to our churches in January. Please mark these dates on your calendar.

PITTSBURG CHURCH

Pastors: Eddie Donelson and Keith McDannel Reporter: Heather Phillips

December is already here, November flew by and 2019 is just around the corner!! Here are some updates on the events that occurred since the November newsletter...

We hosted our annual Fall Festival on Sunday, October 28 at Bandy's Pumpkin Patch with a wonderful lunch, hayrides, bonfire and a fun time in the play barn! We had planned to close out the evening with an outdoor service around a bonfire in our parking lot, but because of the weather, we ended up moving the service into our Youth Room. This was a special treat; it was a wonderful, spirit-filled service!

Our Church Closet was held on Saturday, November 3. We gave away clothing, household items, toys and more. It is such a privilege to be able to provide this blessing to the surrounding community and we are so thankful God allows us to be a vessel and continue to reach those in the community who are in need of so much. We give Him all the glory!!

On Sunday, November 4, we honored our Pastors and their families. The kids of PFWBC sang a few songs and following the evening service, we celebrated Pastor Eddie and Kristal, Pastor Keith and Kim and Youth Leader Kyle and Tonya with a cookie and punch fellowship. We are so appreciative and thankful for each of them!

We are still in the process of collecting shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We will update next month on how many we were able to collect. This is such an awesome outreach and a wonderful way to get involved in International Missions. Last year we collected over 100 filled shoeboxes that were distributed to children across the globe.

On Saturday, December 1 (10am-3pm), we will host our third Christmas Bazaar. We have several business owners within PFWBC that will be setting up booths to sell their items. Join us for a fun day with good people, tasty treats, and a BIG variety of gift ideas to make your loved ones smile.

We pray everyone has a safe and healthy December, all while remembering the reason for this joyous time of the year...our Savior, Jesus!!

"There Ain't Nothin' Gonna Steal Our Joy, in 2018" ...and no one can rob you of that joy. John 16:22

CONNECT CHURCH

Pastor: Dan Smith Reporter: Shirley Brown

Hello, to all our Sister Churches. As in churches all over the State, Nation and World, ours is expecting a busy Christmas season!! Our regular business meeting will be held on December 2nd beginning at 5:00p.m. We have a Secret Sister group that meets in December to find out the identity of each Secret Sister and fellowship together as well as to assign new Secret Sisters for the coming year. This year the dinner event is scheduled for December 4th.

On Saturday, December 8th, the Church will hold its annual Benevolent Dinner and Auction. Funds raised from this event will be used to assist members and others in the community in time of need. On Wednesday, December 12th, we will be packing Christmas Food Baskets, hygiene bags, and gifts for children from infancy to 18 years of age for the needy. Following this will be a fellowship with homemade treats and coffee. This is always a fun event for the members and another opportunity to reach out to the community. The Baskets will be picked up on December 13th and 14th.

Also on December 14th our Christmas Program will be presented at 6:00p.m. It is always good to watch the youngsters' participate in the story of the birth of our Savior, and we appreciate the effort that the teachers and students put forth for this presentation each year. On Sunday, December 16th we will hold a Christmas Candle Light Worship Service beginning at 6:00p.m. On Saturday, December 22nd, we will celebrate **Pastor Dan's 50th Birthday!** The Church and School offices will be closed from December 24th through December 31st. **Happy New Year to you All!!**

ARNOLD VIEW CHURCH

Pastor: Ivan Ryan Reporter: Buddy Parks

Average Sunday School attendance during October was 85. Congratulations to Aaron Ferguson on receiving his Pilot's License. Congrats to Bob and Teresa Galloway, who were married on October 5. The Women Active for Christ meeting was held on October 10. Diana Brown, 63, passed away on October 13. She was a sister to Bryan Frey. Condolences to this family.

Adam Brown brought the evening worship message on October 14. The Fall Festival was held on October 20 at the home of Steve and Robbie Dwyer. Rusty and Brenda Carney were with us on October 21. Rusty shared about their ministry in Japan. Eight of our teens enjoyed an overnight campout at Lake Glendale.

We had a good representation for the South Central District Meeting at Pittsburg on October 27. Adam Brown joined our church on October 28. Trunk or Treat was held inside on a rainy Halloween.

*"In this was manifested the love of God toward us,
because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." - 1 John 4:9*

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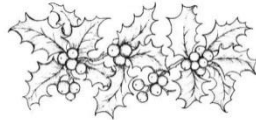
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*Merry
Christmas*

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



BLUE POINT CHURCH

Pastor: Ernie Lewis Reporter: Suzanne Lewis

Brother Ernie has been able to attend a couple of pastor's breakfasts recently. He went to the Hazel Dell breakfast, held during the week of their revival with Ron Helms. Then he also attended the monthly pastor's breakfast at the Country Pride Restaurant in Mt. Vernon. Our local funeral home also had a Pastor's Appreciation breakfast that he and Suzanne were both able to attend.

Thanks to the help of Larry Ohms and Brian Smith of the Calvary Church and several of our men who volunteered, our new camera security system is up and running. We hosted a full Thanksgiving Dinner for our teen group, "Connect", on the first Wednesday of the month. After the meal they had their regular Bible study and played some games in the Link. We are undergoing a November project for Shane and Joy Davison in France. We are collecting various craft items and food items to be used in their ministry. We will package and mail them in December.

Brother Ernie and Suzanne attended the 50th Anniversary of David and Susan Burgess. We enjoyed having the group, "The Faithful Sons", featuring former member Kent Waller, on a recent Sunday evening. Our annual Trunk or Treat was held during beautiful weather and some fifteen trunks were available with treats. Junior Church directors Bill and Christal Lewis hosted a children's program that evening, and then after getting candy from the trunks, the kids played a variety of games set up in the Link.

Congratulations to Madison Smith and Caleb Barnard who were recently married in a beautiful ceremony at the church. We also congratulate Ellie Hill who will be participating in E-TEAM 2019 on a mission trip to St. Croix, Virgin Islands. Ellie also recently attended the "Welcome Days" at Welch College, where high school students get a feel of college life.

Editor's Note: I am adding a letter from Jamie Lee in Champaign for your information:

THE BRIDGE CHURCH:

November was a very busy and very good month. We have seen consistency in our Sunday morning services. This is giving us a platform to build on for the present and the future. There are several of us who have been working on our plan and our calendar for 2019. One of the highlights for November was serving 80 international students there very first American Thanksgiving meal. They were full of smiles and gratitude. After the meal I walked to the area where the pies were and there was whipped cream in a can. The students were shaking the can, trying to figure out how to get the cream to come out. So I became the whipped cream guy for the rest of the night. This is an amazing opportunity and I am glad to be a part of it.

Next stop...Christmas! As a church, we are going to the Christmas parade together and will be having our very first Christmas party. I am really looking forward to it.

Adam and Becca Garrett will be joining our team full-time. They have previously worked with Cliff Donoho. They were hired by Free Will Baptist North American Ministries and will continue to be solely funded through them. Adam will oversee day to day operations, Sunday morning setup and tear down, and organizing our teams. Becca and Heather will be working together with the Bridge Kids. They have two boys, Elijah and Jonah. They will be moving in December.

Our top 2 requests: 3 families or 6 individuals to join our team and God's presence in our services.

Pastor Jamie Lee