

Brothers and Sisters,

I want to wish each of you a glorious Easter! The first day of each new week is a reminder to us that our Lord overcame sin and death on that day! Let's have a special celebration April 4.

Our FVBA Semi-Annual Meeting is scheduled for Monday April 12 6:30 by Zoom. If for some reason you have not received your invitation, please let me know. We are all thankful for the technology that has allowed us to continue to meet despite the pandemic. However, we look forward to upcoming in person meetings in the near future. At our Zoom Semi-Annual Meeting we will hear briefly from several men who will share with us in person in the days ahead. Please click the links below for more information about the speakers.

Adam Herald—Pastor of Refuge Church in Windham, Maine
<http://frontpage.thewindhameagle.com/2017/03/refuge-church-finds-home-in-windham-by.html>
will be preaching at our Annual Meeting October 4 at Calvary Elgin.

Martin Vargas—Pastor of Iglesia Real Church, Hollywood, Florida and President of Come Over Ministry <https://www.coministry.org/who-we-are>
will be preaching at our Great Things Conference Hispanic Version November 6th at Aurora Emanuel.

Scott Harris—new IBSA Director of Evangelism will be giving the IBSA Report at our Annual Meeting October 4 at Calvary Elgin.
<https://www.ibsa.org/ministry-resources/evangelism-discipleship/>

Jacob Kimbrough—new Streater Camp Director will share with us about an Opening Day Event at Streater June 5th. <https://www.ibsa.org/streater/>

We praise the Lord for the work He is doing among the churches affiliated with FVBA. Recently, some of those churches were recognized in the Illinois Baptist as leaders in our State for the number of baptisms. (See Illinois Baptist March 1, 2021 edition page 12—online link—you may need to scroll over to page 12 <https://ibonline.ibsa.org/Illinois-Baptist-03012021-e-Edition/12/>)

Four of our sister churches were listed in the top twenty for baptisms in our state: Crossroads Carol Stream, Families of Faith Channahon, Piedra Angular West

Chicago, and Aurora Emanuel. Two of our churches Piedra Angular and Sycamore were listed among the tops in baptisms per resident members.

Two churches have raised concerns about the Equality Act that has been passed by the United States House of Representatives and is now being considered by the Senate. I contacted IBSA and received an update on the legislation. Below is a portion of the reply that I received from Lisa Misner at IBSA. I found an online article from the Heritage Foundation that discusses some of the legislation's possible threats to religious liberty you may want to check out-<https://www.heritage.org/gender/report/11-myths-about-hr-5-the-equality-act-2021>

“The Equality Act has not yet been voted on by the US Senate and is not law. Because it's not law, the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) and others we would look to for assistance with writing bylaws regarding transgender/equality issues and churches have not issued any legal wording or statements for publication.

Churches currently have the right to hire within their theological beliefs. There is no ruling yet that would require multi-use, multi-gender restrooms or anything similar for churches.

At this point, we would suggest affirming the BFM2000 which can be found at <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>. “Section 3. Man” discusses how God created men and women in his image, and “Section 18. Family” expounds on male and female roles in the family.”

I miss Julio and Joel Cortes who recently moved to Puerto Rico. Recently, Jaime Blanco asked me to come by Vida Nueva Elgin (where Joel and Julio served) to look at some books that Julio and Joel would like to donate to interested parties. There are a number of outstanding books available. Most are in English, but a few in Spanish. To give you an idea of what is available see the picture on the next page of just one book case.



Please continue to pray for the following people. If you have additional prayer requests, please let me know.

Gwen Ware—12 year old daughter of Jonathan and Sarah Ware. Gwen is currently an in-patient at a behavioral facility in Chicago. This is the fourth time she has been an in-patient since October 2020.

Ginnie Jupp—wife of Joel Jupp. Joel and Ginnie have done Student Ministry at NIU. Cancer has returned. Doing Chemo again.

Tim Bailey—NAMB/IBSA Church Planter Catalyst. Recovering from a heart attack. Doing better.

Edgar Hernandez—Hispanic Pastor at First Baptist Harvard. Has lost his sight in one eye. Still awaiting surgery after more treatments.

Because of Jesus, Mark

