

MINUTES

OF THE

THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

WEST FLORIDA
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH THE BETHLEHEM CHURCH,

Jackson County, Florida,

OCTOBER 27, 29 & 30.

1849.

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MINUTES.

The West Florida Baptist Association commenced her third annual session with the Bethlehem Church, Jackson County, Fla., on Saturday, October 27, 1849.

The introductory sermon was preached by Elder E. Vining, from Matt. 5 ch. and 14 verse—"Ye are the light of the world."

These services being concluded, after a short recess, the Association was called to order by the clerk of the last session, when it was stated that the chair was vacant by the illness of the Moderator, who was thus prevented from being present.

On motion, Elder John R. Jones was called to the chair pro tempore. After singing, prayer was offered by Elder B. M. Roberts.

A call being made for the letters from the churches, they were presented and read.

The Association then proceeded to the election of officers, when Elder D. P. Everett was chosen Moderator, and E. Minchin, Clerk.

An opportunity being made for churches desirous of connecting themselves with the Association, to present their letters and delegates, the church at Woodville, Henry County, Ala., petitioned for admission and was received.

Messengers from Corresponding Associations were requested to present themselves, and affectionately invited to participate in our deliberations.

It was announced that brethren E. Cody and J. Martin were present from the Bethel; B. M. Roberts, G. G. McLendon, M. B. Ellis and D. Snell, from the Salem; and W. Blewitt, from the Florida.

On motion, the following committees were appointed:

On business: J. Ratcliff, J. R. Jones, L. Tippins, T. Barnes and T. Mercer.

On religious exercises: E. Vining, W. Barksdale, G. W. Underwood, J. H. Wembwell and J. B. Pearson.

On Finance: D. Cumbie, T. L. Hansford, Wm. Thompson, H. Boit and J. B. Pearson.

On nominations: G. W. Underwood, W. Barksdale and T. Barnes.

On documents: J. H. Wombwell, J. A. Hill, W. Boit, G. Turner and T. Owens.

At the request of the Holmes Creek Church, a committee composed of brethren Blewitt, Everett and Wombwell, were appointed to examine into qualifications of bro. G. W. Underwood for the deaconship, and to ordain him, if it should be found advisable.

The Association then adjourned to meet on Monday morning at 9 o'clock. Prayer by Elder E. Cody.

LORD'S DAY.

The congregation in the house was addressed in the forenoon by brethren Blewitt and Everett; in the afternoon by brethren Cody and Tippins. Bro. D. Cumbie labored at the stand for the colored people. The ordination of bro. G. W. Underwood to the deaconship, also took place. A collection was taken up, and \$21 68, was obtained in cash, \$4 in subscriptions.

MONDAY, October 29, 1849.

The Association assembled pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Elder Blewitt.

The minutes of Saturday were then read and the roll called.

The committee on business presented their report, which was adopted, and the committee discharged.

The committee to visit the church in Apalachicola, presented thro bro. Jones, the following report:

Only one of your committee visited the church in Apalachicola, who in connection with bro. T. G. Bowen, examined the state of the church, and finding it in disorder, proceeded to a new constitution.

A letter was then presented asking for admission for the new organization, being read, the church was received, and the hand of fellowship extended to her delegate by the Moderator.

The committee to prepare "Articles of Faith, with Scripture References," offered those of the Tuskegee Association, which were adopted with one or two amendments, and will be found appended to these minutes.

The reading of the Rules of Decorum was called for and performed.

The committee on finance presented their report, which was adopted. See appendix A.

The missionary agent made a verbal report as follows:

Received of bro. B. Smith,	\$ 50
" F. King,	50
	<hr/>
Total,	\$1 00

The executive committee made their report, which was read. See appendix B.

The missionary of the Association handed in his report, which was adopted. See appendix C.

A report of missionary labor performed by Elder David Cumbie, was received and ordered to be inserted in the minutes. See appendix D.

The committee on nominations reported as follows:

Elder J. R. Jones write Corresponding Letter. J. H. Wombwell preach the next Introductory Sermon; D. P. Everett, his alternate. E. Minchin write Circular Letter. Elected for an Executive Committee, G. W. Underwood, J. A. Hill, T. Barnes, Wm. Sorey, E. Vining, E. Minchin, and J. R. Jones.

The committee on documents made their report. See appendix E.

The Annual Circular Letter not being prepared, brothers J. H. Wombwell and W. Blewitt were requested to furnish a substitute.

The next session of this Association was then appointed to be held with the Union Academy Church, to commence Saturday before the 4th Lord's day in October, 1850.

The Association then adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock. Prayer by Elder L. Tippins.

TUESDAY Morning, October 30, 1849.

The Association convened according to adjournment. Prayer by Elder E. Vining.

The substitute for the customary Circular Letter was read and adopted. It will appear at the close of the minutes.

The following resolutions were offered, and after discussion, adopted.

Resolved, That we deem the great destitution in south-east Alabama and West Florida, as sufficient to enlist the attention of this Association, and we are grieved to see other bodies taking no steps to carry into effect the incipient measures begun at the Missionary Mass Meeting held in Enon the last spring.

Resolved, That we cherish the object had in view in appointing a similar meeting at Tuskegee, and we recommend that object to the favorable notice of our churches and brethren.

The Mt. Pleasant Church having been reported to be in disorder, brethren Wombwell, Jones and Hansford were appointed a committee to visit it.

The following resolution was offered and passed :

Resolved, That the pastors of churches in the West Florida Baptist Association, be requested to urge upon their different charges the necessity of raising during the coming year a fund for missionary purposes, and further, that they preach at least one sermon to each church during the year, on the subject of missions, and that the deacons of the churches act as agents in collecting funds for that object.

The treasurer of the Association made his report, which was agreed to. See Appendix F.

Messengers to Corresponding Associations were then appointed.

To the Bethlehem—J. H. Wombwell and J. Ratcliff; Saturday before 4th Lord's day in Sept.

To the Tuskegee—E. Vining, D. P. Everett and G. M. Williams; Saturday before 3d Lord's day in Sept.

To the Salim—David Cumbie, T. L. Hansford and G. W. Underwood; Saturday before 1st Lord's day in October.

To the Florida—E. Vining, E. Minchin, J. R. Jones and J. Wooten; Saturday before 2d Lord's day in October.

To the Bethel—Not able to send Messengers on account of the time and distance. Ordered bro. J. H. Underwood to write to that body an explanation.

General meetings were appointed: for the 1st district, Big Spring, Friday before 5th Lord's day in March; for the 2d district, Rehoboth, Friday before 5th Lord's day in June.

The business of the Association being nearly completed, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That the thanks of this body are due to the citizens and brethren of the vicinity for their kindness and hospitality extended to us during our session.

Resolved, That the Clerk have 500 copies of these minutes printed, and properly distributed to the churches, and \$15 be allowed him for his services.

The Association then adjourned for the purpose of hearing the closing sermon, which was feelingly and forcibly delivered by Elder Blewitt.

These exercises being ended, the Moderator announced the body to stand adjourned to the Saturday preceding the 4th Lord's day in

October 1850, to meet with the Union Academy Church, Jackson County, Florida.

D. P. EVERETT, Moderator.

E. MINCHIN, Clerk.

CIRCULAR.

Beloved in the Lord :—By appointment of the Association, the following history of the churches composing "The West Florida Baptist Association," is submitted as a substitute for the customary Circular Letter.

The Bethlehem Church, though of comparative recent organization, is the oldest in our body. This vine was planted in the year 1825, and for a time increased in influence; passing periods, however, saw her glory measurably depart, and Ichabod written on her history. Under the ministry of Elder Joshua Mercer, the pioneer Baptist missionary in this section, this church was resuscitated, and has for some time been steadily growing in membership. The additions during the past year, and the contributions to different benevolent objects, may correctly express the state of religion within her pale.

Sardis, in the same County, Jackson, originated in the year 1825. Antinomianism for several succeeding years exerted a deleterious savour, and came nigh destroying her existence. Already she would have been numbered with institutions that have been, had it not have been for the blessing of God, who is ever merciful, upon the labors of Elders Mercer, Rowe and Bowen. Since the commencement of faithful administrations of divine truth by these self-sacrificing "heralds of the cross," her prospects have been brightening, and this church, now, is a leading one in the Association.

Union Academy was gathered and constituted in the year '44, likewise by our venerable brother Mercer. This church has, from the time of its establishment, been gradually growing. Its state may be learned by reference to the statistical table.

Big Spring, Henry County, Ala., was constituted in '45. In her letter to the present session of the Association, is communicated nothing of a cheering nature. The state of religion is reported to be languid, and the cause of Christ seems from her statistics, not to prosper as in former days; yet the members confess a sensibility of the obligations they are under to engage with zeal in the furtherance of their master's work.

Econfina, Washington County, Fla., came into being in '46. No letter nor representative this year.

Liberty Hill, is in the same County, and was begun about the same time; it has to contend against opposition and does not flourish.

Holmes' Valley, also in Washington County, was formed in '46; reports prosperity in worldly matters, but in spiritual things as doing almost nothing.

New Hope, Walton County, Fla., was organized nearly at the same time. Reports herself cold and dull.

Harmony, Holmes' County, Fla., constituted in '46, is but a small interest, communicates nothing cheering.

New Hope, Henry County, Ala., began in '47; reports to be in a lukewarm condition.

Rehoboth, Washington County, Fla., an interest of but little more than two years standing, having been formed in '47, is the most prosperous church in the Association, and the only one that sustains a Sabbath school. It has received the past year thirty-five additions. May not other churches learn an important lesson from the engagedness of this in a good work?

Mt. Pleasant, Jackson County, Fla., arose in '47. No delegate or letter. It is reported to be in disorder.

Woodville, Henry County, Ala., is in its second year, and is a small body.

Holmes' Creek, Jackson County, Fla., of the same age, reports that her prosperity is blasted and influence withered by anti-[nomian]ism

Apalachicola Church was constituted in the year 1848. It is beginning to grow in numbers. Labors under the want of a M. H. It has a membership of thirty-three.

The history of the churches shows that prayerful devotion to God causes prosperity and fills the souls of christians with heavenly fire. Then, let us, brethren, "with high endeavor and glad resolve," go on in the pathway of duty, with patience, until the Lord revive his work more abundantly, making "Floral Land" to be covered with gospel flowers. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

J. H. WOMBWELL, Ch'n.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The West Florida Baptist Association to the Associations with whom she corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of our Heavenly Father, we have been permitted to meet again in an Associational capacity. While some of our churches complain of coldness and barrenness, others have gladdened our hearts by the communication of the cheering news that they have been blest with a visitation of the good spirit from on high. Our messengers were providentially prevented from attending your sessions. We assure you, we feel the worth of christian correspondence, and hope you will continue to cheer us with annual visits; in return, we will ever pray for your success in promoting the declarative glory of God, and in the securing of your own joy. May the Lord cause his face to shine upon you and bless you.

D. P. EVERETT, Moderator.

E. MINCHIN, Clerk.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Of the West Florida Baptist Association.

ART. 1. We believe in the existence of one only true and living God; and that he has made himself known to his people under the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: the same in essence, and equal in every divine perfection. Refer to Mark 12, 32; 1 Tim., 1, 2-5; James 3, 19; Exo. 20, 1-3; Isa. 46, 9; Ps. 45, 3; Isa. 9, 6; John 1, 1-4; 5, 23; 10, 30; Matt. 28, 19; 1 John, 5, 7.

ART. 2. We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice. 2 Tim. 3, 16-17; 2 Peter, 1, 21; 1 Peter, 1, 10; 2 Sam. 23, 2; Acts 1, 16; 23, 21.

ART. 3. We believe in the doctrine of election; that God chose his people, in Christ, before the foundation of the world; that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestined them unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will. Ephesians, 1, 4-5.

ART. 4. We believe in the doctrine of original sin. Gen. 3, 6-7; 6, 5; 8, 21; Isa. 1, 5-6; Ps. 14, 1-3; Rom. 5, 12; 1, 28-32; 6, 23; Matt. 15, 18-20.

ART. 5. We believe in man's impotency to recover himself from

the fallen state he is in by nature, by his own will and ability. John 6, 44-45; Rom. 11, 6; Eph. 2, 8-9.

ART. 6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed righteousness of Christ. Rom. 3, 21-26; 4, 5-18; 6, 23; Ps. 45; Prov. 8; John 10, 9-15; Isa. 57, 4-8; Acts 4, 11-12; Rom. 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 21.

ART. 7. We believe that God's elect shall be called, regenerated, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Eph. 2, 1-10; 2 Tim. 1, 9; Tit. 3, 4-7; Col. 1, 11-13; 1 Cor. 2, 10-12; 2 Cor. 1, 10-12; 4, 6; John 6, 63; 16, 13-14.

ART. 8. We believe that nothing can separate true believers from the love of God, but that they will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. John 10, 28-30; 6, 37; 13, 1; Phil. 1, 6; 1 Peter 1, 5; Deut. 33, 3; Cant. 8, 6-7; Heb. 6, 17-18; John 17, 23.

ART. 9. We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, that true believers are the only subjects of these ordinances, and that immersion only is baptism. Matt. 3, 5-12; Mark 1, 5; Luke 3, 7-8; Acts 2, 38-42; John 3, 23; Rom. 6, 3-4; Col. 2, 12; 1 Peter 3, 21; Acts 18, 8.

ART. 10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general Judgment. Job 19, 26-27; Dan. 12, 2; Hos. 13, 14; Mark 12, 24-27; 2 Cor. 5, 10; 1 Cor. 15.

ART. 11. We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting, and that the joys of the righteous will be eternal. Matt. 25, 16; 2 Thess. 1, 9; Rev. 7, 14-17.

ART. 12. We believe that no minister has a right to administer the ordinances, unless he is called of God, and come under the imposition of hands by a Presbytery, and is in fellowship in the Church of which he is a member.

APPENDIX.—A.

The committee on Finance have received through the delegates from the churches, for minutes, \$11 90; for Association and Missionary fund, 73 71; from collectors on Sabbath, 20 68.—Total, —\$107 29.
D. CUMBIE, Ch'n.

B.

The Executive Committee beg leave to report, that they employed Elder J. H. Wombwell to labor as the missionary of the Association, from the first of last April up to the present time, requiring him

to preach in Marianna as often as a house could be procured for that purpose, and to preach to all the churches in our bounds, and further to take up collections for the purpose of building a M. H. in Marianna. We are happy to say that bro. Wombwell has discharged the duties required of him with great faithfulness; for further particulars we refer to his report.
E. MINCHIN, Ch'n.

C.

Under instructions from the Executive Committee, the missionary of the Association has travelled 1666 miles, preached 106 times, collected for purpose of erecting a M. H. in Marianna, \$30 50 in cash, in subscriptions \$15 00. Other services unnecessary to be enumerated, have been also performed. J. H. WOMBWELL.

D.

The undersigned was requested in the beginning of the year to travel and preach in the Western part of the Association; he reports having travelled 1100 miles, preached 62 times, baptized 5.

E.

The committee on Documents, on examination of the letters from the churches and minutes of corresponding bodies, report they find nothing necessary to present for your consideration; they have distributed the minutes from corresponding Associations and Missionary mass meeting; they recommend to the patronage of our churches and brethren, "The Monthly Miscellany," published in Atlanta, Ga. the "Christian Index," Penfield, Ga., "The Alabama Baptist Advocate," Marion; "The Southwestern Baptist Chronicle," New Orleans, La., the "Missionary Journal," and "The Commission," Richmond, Va.
J. H. WOMBWELL, Ch'n.

F.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The West Florida Baptist Association, in account with Thomas Barnes, Treasurer.

1849—To this amt. recd. of E. Com. of last year,	\$40 20
" for building M. H. in Marianna,	30 50
" from Com. on Finance,	107 29
To donation from J. H. W.,	5 50
	<hr/>
	\$183 49

By this amt. paid Missionary,	\$40 20
" " " "	15 00
" " " "	62 79
" " " "	15 00
" " " " Clerk,	18 00
" " " " for printing minutes,	30 50
Amt. in hand for M. H. in Marianna,	<hr/>
	\$181 49

Now in hand,

\$2 00
THOS. BARNES, Treas'r.