

OBITUARY.

Since the last Annual Session of this body, Death has removed from time and earth, Elder J. R. JONES, a Minister of this Association, and for some years the Pastor of the Sardis Church.

Brother JONES was born in the year 1817, in Wilkerson County, Georgia, and ordained to the work of the ministry by the Mount Ararat Church, Stewart County, of the same State, in 1843. At the time of his death, he was preaching for the Church in Apalachicola.

He has left a weeping widow and several children to mourn their loss; but they are not without hope, for they know their loss is his infinite gain.

MINUTES

OF THE

Seventh Annual Session

OF THE

WEST FLORIDA BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION,

CONVENED AT BETHLEHEM CHURCH,

CAMPBELLTON, JACKSON CO.,

FLORIDA.

October 22d to 24th,

1853.

TALLAHASSEE:

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SATURDAY, October 22, 1853.

The appointed minister not arriving in time, the introductory sermon, by request, was preached by Elder G. G. McLendon, from Gallatians 6: 7, 8. Conclusion by Elder D. P. Everett.

Elder L. T. Eubanks was appointed to preach in the afternoon, and after the necessary intermission for refreshment, the Association assembled in the Academy for business, and were called to order by the former Moderator.

Suitable devotional exercises were engaged in. Letters from the Churches read—names of the delegates recorded, and the body organized by electing, Elder Joshua Mercer, Moderator, and D. W. Horne, Clerk.

On the proper invitation, Holmes Spring Church, Holmes County, Florida, made application and was admitted into this association through her delegates.

Correspondence from sister associations was called for: Whereupon, Elder G. G. McLendon, Elder Joel Simms, and brother William Ross, from the Salem; Elder L. T. Eubanks and Elder M. J. Westmoreland, from the Tuskegee; and brother Samuel Stanton, from the Judson, respectively presented themselves and were cordially invited to seats with us, and a participation in the deliberations of the body.

An invitation to visiting ministers to seats with us, was accepted by Elder Z. Nix, and Elder D. Giddens.

On motion, the following committees were appointed:
On Religious Exercises.—N. W. Miller, W. W. Boykin, D. P. Everett, T. R. Mercer, and W. Sorey.

On Business.—S. Rowe, William Bell, and D. Fennel.

On Finance.—J. R. Haggard, T. D. Gibson, and W. L. Hatton.

On Documents.—D. P. Everett, A. J. Barksdale, and N. Moates.

On Publications.—R. Webb, Jesse Taylor, and Daniel Neel.

On State of the Churches.—J. R. Haggard, L. C. Musgrove, and S. Dickson.

On Nominations.—Wm. Sorey, J. Howard, William L. Hatton.

On Letter of Correspondence.—S. Rowe.

On motion, then adjourned to Monday morning, 9 o'clock. Prayer by brother Simms.

LORD'S DAY, October 23, 1853.

According to appointment, the exercises of the day commenced with a Prayer Meeting conducted by Elder M. J. Westmoreland, at 9 ½ o'clock.

By arrangement of the minister appointed last year, the missionary sermon was preached by Elder J. Simms, followed by Elder D. P. Everett, at the close of which a public contribution was made for Missionary purposes, amounting to \$43 70.

In the afternoon, Elder R. Webb preached, followed by brother William Ross. At night Elder D. Giddens preached, and Elder J. Mercer closed.

Brother Westmoreland preached for the colored people in the forenoon, and took up a collection amounting to \$5 25

for the Central African Mission. After intermission, brother Everett preached to the same people—closing services by brother Haggard.

The number of persons present, the good order which prevailed, and the interest in the spread of the Gospel, manifested by so liberal a collection, are considerations of encouragement; and it is earnestly hoped the interesting services dispensed throughout the day, may prove the power of God unto salvation to many precious souls.

MONDAY Morning, 9 o'clock, October 24, 1853.

The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Called to order by the Moderator, who, after singing, requested brother Eubanks to lead in prayer. Arrangements having been made for regular church service, the body proceeded to business.

Called for the report from the Committee on Business, which was received and adopted.

The minutes of Saturday were read and approved. Called the roll, and noted absentees.

The Decorum being read, the Moderator urged the importance of its rules being strictly adhered to. Renewed the invitation to new churches, correspondence from sister associations, and visiting ministers to seats.

Messengers to Sister Associations appointed as follows:

To the Tuskegee—J. Mercer, D. P. Everett, J. R. Haggard, and R. Webb, at Tuskegee Ala., Saturday before the third Lord's day in September next.

To the Salem, to be held Saturday before the first Lord's day in October—D. P. Everett, J. Mercer, A. J. Barksdale, D. Fennel, and R. Webb.

To the Judson, to be held Saturday before the third Lord's day in October—R. Webb, J. R. Haggard, D. Fennel, and N. W. Miller.

To the Bethel, on the first in November—brother Webb.

Brother J. R. Haggard, by voluntary consent, was appointed to represent this body in the Baptist State Convention of Alabama, and on motion, our Treasurer instructed to advance funds to pay his expenses. (*For want of the necessary conveyance, brother Haggard found he could not get to the Convention in time; our contribution was therefore forwarded through brother Westmoreland, to be carried up by Rev. S. Henderson, of Tuskegee.—Clerk.*)

The Executive Committee presented the following report, which was adopted:

During the last associational year, your committee has been unable with the small amount of funds on hand, to secure anything like permanent and efficient missionary service, and have therefore an unexpended balance, which the report of your Treasurer will show. We proposed to contribute \$100 to the support of brother Webb, provided his services could be obtained two months, west of the Choctawhatchie River, but as circumstances prevented him from complying with such conditions, your Committee would submit to your body what should be done in the premises, with regard to his services at Apalachicola only.

We are happy to state that the esteemed Missionary sent to us and supported by the Tuskegee Association, has been faithful, energetic, and greatly profitable in the labors committed to him, and that his reports, which were by us regularly presented to his association, were entirely satisfactory to that honored body, who, in the fulness of their benevolent hearts, have agreed to sustain brother Westmoreland amongst us again, the ensuing year.

Encouraged by past blessings, with a brighter future in view, we earnestly look forward to a greater increase in means and efficiency, which will enable your body to cultivate in a higher degree, the moral field divinely appointed to your charge.

Respectfully submitted,

D. P. EVERETT, *Chairman.*

On motion, the foregoing report was adopted, and

Resolved, That the Executive Committee be instructed to appropriate fifty dollars to aid the Apalachicola Church in defraying the expenses of brother Webb for the past year.

A letter from the Orange Hill Sabbath School Missionary Society, signed by Mary E. A. Horne, Benvene A. Everett, and Ruth A. Holloway, was presented by brother D. P. Everett, enclosing twenty dollars to be appropriated to our domestic missionary operations; which was gratefully received, and the thanks of the body warmly returned to the Society for their praiseworthy and successful efforts to advance the reign of Christ on the earth.

An election for the Executive Committee now took place, which resulted in the choice of Charles N. Hartsfield, Chairman, Thomas Barnes, sen., William Sorey, D. W. Horne, and W. L. Hatton.

The following report of the Travelling Agent was received and adopted:

Your Agent begs leave to report, that he has been unable on account of sickness, to perform as much service within your bounds as he anticipated. He has however presented your claims and taken collections at some of the most important points, and left the funds so collected with the respective Churches, to be sent up to your body with their annual contributions.

Your Agent also visited the Tuskegee and Salem Associations as usual. The former, of their own free will and accord, have agreed again to sustain a missionary within your bounds for the ensuing year; and the latter contributed in cash and on subscription, the amount of \$56 00 to aid us.

Your Agent finding the Liberty Association was in reach, visited that body also; who, on hearing of our destitution, raised by voluntary contribution \$61 25, to be applied to operations in your bounds through the Board of Domestic Missions Southern Baptist Convention. Collected on old subscription here, \$7 00

J. MERCER, *Agent.*

Upon the subject of the destitution in Holmes and Walton Counties, after interesting remarks by different brethren, on motion, it was

Resolved, That the Executive Committee be instructed to endeavour immediately to obtain a suitable missionary who will locate, and supply the want of ministerial service in that region of country the ensuing year, for the amount of \$300.

Report of the Committee on Documents being called for was received and adopted, as follows:

On examination of letters from the churches, we find

1. A request from the Union Academy Church, that the next session of this body be held with them.

2. A query from the Bethlehem Church in reference to Baptists dealing in ardent spirits.

3. All the churches giving any expression on the subject, are in favor of an increase of membership in the Association; and no objection is presented by any to constituting the standing officers of the body members, by virtue of their office; it being left with you to decide upon the best mode of increasing our number.

4. The extraordinary length and character of the letter from Big Spring Church, we believe, demand your consideration.

D. P. EVERETT, *Chairman*.

Upon the first item in the above report, it was

Resolved, That the next session of this body be held with the Union Academy Church—to commence on Saturday before the fourth Sabbath in October, 1854.

To the query, "Is it right for a Baptist to stand behind a counter in a grog shop, and sell liquor?"—it is replied that in our opinion it is most emphatically wrong for Baptists to deal in ardent spirits as an article of merchandize, under any circumstances.

On the subject of increasing our membership, it was

Resolved, That the 7th Article of our Constitution be so changed as to entitle each church of our body to four dele-

gates instead of two; the ratio otherwise remaining unaltered.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That while there are sentiments in the letter from Big Spring Church, in reference to Missionary services, which we appreciate, the general spirit and temper manifested, and its exceeding and unnecessary length, we regard as highly objectionable.

The Committee on Finance presented the following Report, which was adopted:

Received through the different Church letters:	
For Minutes, - - - - -	\$17 75—\$17 75
" Home Missions, - - - - -	9 05—9 05
" Associational Purposes, - - - - -	73 75—73 75
" Central African Missions, - - - - -	1 70—1 70
Collection on Sabbath:	
From White Congregation, - - - - -	\$43 70
" Blacks for Central African Mission, - - - - -	5 25
" Orange Hill S. S. M. S. - - - - -	20 00—\$68 95—68 95
Total, - - - - -	\$171 20

Paid over the above to William Sorey, Treasurer.

J. R. HAGGARD, *Chairman*.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Wm. Sorey, Treasurer, in account with the West Florida Baptist Association:

1852	DR.	
Oct. 30—	To Balance in hand, - - - - -	\$143 92
Nov. 6—	" cash received of Travelling Agent, - - - - -	86 80
Dec. 4—	" " " " D. P. Everett Af. Mis. - - - - -	20
	" 21— " bill on St. Mary's Bank, - - - - -	5 00
1853 Oct. 24—	" cash received from Finance Committee, - - - - -	171 20
	" " " " voluntary contribution for board at Marion, - - - - -	25 00
	Total, - - - - -	\$432 12
1852.	CR.	
Oct. 30—	By cash paid Jos. H. Wombwell, Clerk. - - - - -	\$ 20 00
Nov. 6—	" " " " J. Mercer, Miss. Agent, - - - - -	50 00
" 23—	" " " " Z. Nix, per order of Bethlehem Female Missionary Society, - - - - -	26 30
" 23—	" sent by D. P. Everett to board at Marion for African Missions, - - - - -	18 00

1853 Jan. 3—	“ cash paid for printing minutes,	27 00
Oct. 25—	“ cash sent Alabama State Convention,	42 00
“ “	“ cash paid Rev. R. Webb,	20 00
“ “	“ cash paid D. W. Horne, Clerk,	178 82
“ “	“ balance in hand,	
		<hr/> \$432 12

Called for the Report on Publications, when the following was received and adopted:

In view of the destitution of preaching and pastoral labour in our midst, your committee recommend, as the best substitute, the reading of religious newspapers, and good books—the Bible being chief. The South Western Baptist, published at Montgomery, Ala., at \$2 00; the Christian Index, Penfield, Georgia, at the same price; the New Orleans Baptist Chronicle at \$1 00, are particularly recommended.

We would also recommend that the Association purchase books from the Southern Baptist Publication Society, Charleston, and send from house to house by the hand of the Missionary, that all may have an opportunity of obtaining the best of books.

As a standard Hymn book for public worship, we earnestly recommend the immediate adoption of the Baptist Psalmody in all our churches. R. WEBB, *Chairman*.

The Report of the Committee on the State of the Churches was then read and adopted, as follows:

The state of the churches is exceedingly various. In some, the Lord has revived his work; in others, there are contentions. Some have regular preaching, and are doing well, while several are entirely destitute, and are almost extinct. It is worthy of notice, that where the gospel is regularly preached, good is done, and the churches are more or less prosperous.

Sardis, is in a healthy condition. She has enjoyed a precious revival; no doubt in answer to prayer, as they have kept up a prayer meeting most of the year. With little ministerial labor, the Lord pours out his blessing in answer

to prayer. If they had a sabbath school, doubtless they would prosper more.

Orange Hill is indeed a city set on a hill that cannot be hid. Light shines from Heaven upon her, and that light is seen by all around. The Lord has revived that church, and much good has been the result. They have a prayer meeting, a sabbath school, and a missionary society. Let other churches see their *good works*, go and do likewise, and like them enjoy the smiles of Heaven.

New Providence has been cold and languid, for the want of the regular ministry of the gospel. She has enjoyed a revival recently, and if she will live as she should, may prosper. A sabbath school and prayer meeting are very much needed here.

Mt. Pisgah is not in a very prosperous condition. *Causes*, want of a pastor, want of prayer meeting, sabbath school—much prayer, more reading, &c.

Flat Creek, rather stationary. They have regular preaching, but no sabbath school, no prayer meeting, &c.

Union Academy has gained strength by accessions by letter; and outwardly affairs prosperous. It is hoped that when her house of worship is completed, she will establish a prayer meeting, and sabbath school; and will exert a more salutary influence in her vicinity than she does, or *can* do, in her present condition.

Salem languishes. She has no pastor, no sabbath school. Has a prayer meeting.

Ucheeanna is almost entirely without the means of grace. Yet she lives, and prays, and is very desirous of having the word of God regularly dispensed among them.

Big Spring.—If she is as prolific in good works, as she is in length and variety in her church-letter, she must certainly do well.

Bethlehem, composed mostly of females, still pursues her onward course. Active piety, and persevering zeal can overcome all difficulties, remove all mountains, and accomplish (almost) impossibilities. She has a prayer meeting.

Apalachicola was a tender plant in an inhospitable climate—has had to contend with numerous and almost insurmountable difficulties. Yet by the grace of God she has done valiantly—she has weathered the storm—she has returned to her erect position after the gale. She grows and thrives in the midst of the drought; and if it be asked where in her strength lies, we answer of course, in God. But so far as means are concerned, we answer, *in prayer*. In her three or four prayer meetings weekly—in her secret prayer—in her family prayers—her sabbath schools, in her benevolence, &c.

Holmes Spring is a new constitution; is a small body—has never enjoyed the services of a pastor, and is almost entirely without the means of grace. It is exceedingly important that she have the regular ministry of the word.

Bethel, Holmes Creek, Econfina, Holmes Valley, Liberty Hill, Harmony, and Alaqua, are not represented. It is supposed these are all destitute, and are almost in a state of dissolution.

It is worthy of remark, not only that those churches which are best supplied with the ministry are most prosperous, but especially those churches that are most active in doing good are most blessed of God.

J. R. HAGGARD, *Chairman*.

Took up a voluntary collection for the use of the Board Domestic Missions, S. B. C., amounting to \$25, and on motion, instructed the Treasurer to add \$10 from the unappropriated funds, to the amount otherwise contributed, to the Central African Mission; making in all, \$42, sent up to the Alabama B. S. C.

Committee on Nominations reported as follows, which was concurred in.

Elder R. Webb to preach the next introductory sermon, D. P. Everett his alternate. Elder S. Rowe to preach the Missionary sermon, Elder J. Mercer his alternate.

On motion,

Resolved, That the Clerk have 500 copies of these minutes printed and properly distributed among the churches; and that \$20 be allowed him for his services.

On motion,

Resolved, That the thanks of this body are due, and are hereby tendered the community, for their superior entertainment of the Association; and for their great liberality manifested by their public contributions towards our missionary efforts.

On motion,

Resolved, That we continue an expression of gratitude to the Salem and Tuskegee Associations for their sympathy and aid. And also rejoice to hear that the Liberty Association have been awakened to our need, and have begun to contribute to the support of the Gospel in this region.

Resolved, That the East Alabama Female College be recommended to the brethren and friends of this Association, as eminently worthy the patronage of all who desire for their daughters a thorough and polished education.

Read and adopted the letter of correspondence; and on motion, after some affecting remarks and prayer by brother G. G. McLendon, adjourned to meet again with the Union Academy Church, eight miles North-east from Marianna, on Saturday before the fourth Lord's day in October, 1854.

J. MERCER, *Moderator*.

D. W. HORNE, *Clerk*.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The West Florida Baptist Association, to all others with whom she Corresponds.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By the divine favor we have been permitted to hold our seventh annual session; which has been marked by more than ordinary interest, and great harmony and fraternal kindness. Though we are yet comparatively a small and weak band of christian soldiers, we feel hopeful that our labors have not been in vain in the Lord; and it would be sinful to question the evidences by which we are surrounded, showing that "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Though we were disappointed in not meeting with some dear brethren whose names we noticed as appointed messengers, the few that attended our meeting were gladly received, and their important aid duly appreciated. Hoping to meet with more of you at our next session, and that we may long enjoy your christian kindness and friendly aid, we remain, dear brethren, your affectionate and grateful fellow laborers in the work of the Lord.

J. MERCER, Moderator.

D. W. HORNE, Clerk,

STATISTICAL TABLE.

CHURCHES.	DELEGATES.	Baptized.							
		Rec'd by let.	Dis. by let.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total.	For minut's.	Missionary purposes.	
Big Spring,	W. L. Hatton, J. Taylor,	8	7	4	1	44	1 50	6 15	
Sardis,	S. Rowe, A. Barksdale,	27	4	2	0	61	1 50	14 25	
Orange Hill,	MERCER, EVERETT, Loomis,	14	5	3	0	79	2 00	20 00	
New Providence	Musgrove, S. Dixon,	15	6	2	1	35	1 00	2 25	
Mount Pisgah,	Z. Mercer, J. Cook,	0	4	4	3	27	1 00	1 00	
Flat Creek.	Not represented.	0	0	2	0	11	75		
Union Academy,	Wm. Sorey, Haggard,	1	12	6	0	46	3 00	20 00	
Salem,	Wm. Barksdale, J. Howard,	0	5	0	1	18	1 00	5 00	
Ucheena,	N. Monts, D. Neel,	0	1	6	0	27	1 00	9 10	
Bellehem,	W. Jaykin, N. W. Miller,	2	2	0	2	54	3 00	6 40	
Apalachicola,	R. Warr, T. D. Gibson,	20	8	3	5	86	1 00	2 35	
Holmes' Spring,	D. Fennel,					9	1 00	1 00	
Belhel,	Not represented.					6			
Holmes' Creek,	"					2			
Econaha,	"					11			
Holmes' Valley,	"					20			
Liberty Hill,	"					15			
Harmony,	"					7			
Alaquan,	"					10			
Note.—Ordained Ministers in small capitals. Licentiates in Italics.									
Total,		87	60	34	19	10	568	17 75	84 50