


MINUTES



OF THE

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

West Florida Baptist Association,

HELD WITH THE

CHURCH AT GREENWOOD, FLORIDA,

COMMENCING OCTOBER 20th, 1877.

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1877.



MINUTES.

The Thirty-first Annual Session of the WEST FLORIDA ASSOCIATION met with the Church at Greenwood, Fla., October 20th, 1877, and pursuant to appointment the Introductory Sermon was preached by J. W. Johnson from 9th Chapter Acts and 11th verse—"And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul," &c.

After one and a quarter hours intermission the delegates assembled in the Church and were called to order by the former Moderator.

The letters from the churches were handed in and read by Brethren A. P. Ashurst and J. T. Mann, and the following delegates enrolled:

Antioch—R. Kidd.
Bethlehem—J. W. Rawls, W. R. Shores.
Bethesda—H. McCallister, J. M. Davis.
Campbellton—E. N. Dekle, W. J. Daniel.
Cedar Pond—J. N. Boone, H. C. Neel.
Concord—A. Cooley, J. W. Johnson.
Damascus—Miles York, Henry Gleason.
Ephesus—J. M. Christmas, John Brewner.
Flat Creek—J. T. Mann.
Friendship—H. Sewell, J. Lynn.
Greenwood—T. E. Langley, A. P. Ashurst.
Hickory Level—John Stuart.
Mt. Olive—S. O' Bryan, J. H. Gable.
Mt. Pleasant—T. J. Creamer.
Memphis—Milton Avery, Wesley Hall.
Orange Hill—J. M. Motes.
Providence—Levi Shelfer, Z. Johnson;
Paradise Grove—J. T. Allen.
Poplar Spring—Greene Bryant, H. Daffin.
Rocky Grove—S. N. Mercer, C. Herring, G. W. Basset.
Rehoboth—G. W. Sanders.
Sardis—G. W. Goodson, J. M. Trasler,
Selma—J. A. Johnson, J. H. Lizenby.

The body proceeded to permanently organize—the result of which was the unanimous election of Thos. E. Langley Moderator, and W. J. Daniel Clerk.

Called for Petitionary Letters—none presented.
Called for correspondents from other bodies and received Brethren J. R. Jordan, T. F. Coonrod, Joseph Coonrod, T. S. Stapleton and Philip Coonrod from the Judson Association.

Appointed the following correspondents: To the Judson Association—T. E. Langley, R. Kidd, W. J. Cook, W. Boone, Z. Johnson. To the New-ten Association—J. W. Rawls, John Stuart, D. A. Skipper, J. W. Johnson, T. E. Langley, W. J. Daniel, J. H. Gabriel. To the Association of South East Alabama and West Florida—W. J. Daniel and Thos. E. Langley.

Appointed brethren Rawls, Neel, Cook, Bevis and Long a Committee on Preaching.

On motion, R. Kidd was recognized as a delegate from Antioch Church in the absence of the regularly elected delegates.

The Moderator was allowed until to-morrow to announce the appointment of various committees.

The Committee on Preaching made known the following appointments: A. R. Herring to preach to-night (Saturday); T. E. Langley to-morrow at 11 o'clock; A. P. Ashurst at 2 p. m., and D. W. Skipper at night.

A motion to adjourn until Monday morning, 8½ o'clock, was adopted.

At the request of Brother R. C. B. Lawrence, who is now lying very sick and low, the closing prayer was offered by A. P. Ashurst especially in his behalf.

The delegates and friends met at the church on Sabbath morning at 10 o'clock and spent one hour in prayer meeting capacity, conducted by A. P. Ashurst.

At 11 o'clock, T. E. Langley addressed a very large and attentive congregation and presented for their consideration some truths as believed by Baptists, as also did A. P. Ashurst at 2 p. m. and D. W. Skipper at night.

Monday morning, at 8½ o'clock, the body was called to order by the Moderator, and on motion by Bro. Mann, the reading of the Minutes was dispensed with until the close of the session.

The Moderator announced the following committees:

ON DOCUMENTS—J. T. Mann, J. W. Johnson, W. Boone.

NOMINATIONS—H. Sewell, H. Daffin, M. York.

MISSIONS—A. P. Ashurst, J. Stuart, W. J. Daniel.

FINANCE—E. N. Dekle, J. Lynn, H. C. Neel.

The report on Documents read and adopted as below.

Report on Documents.

Your Committee on Documents beg leave to report that both Cedar Pond and Campbellton churches ask to entertain the next session of your body. We recommend that a vote of the body be taken to decide which church they will meet with. The church at Flat Creek asks for a letter of dismission. We recommend that it be granted.

Respectfully,

J. T. MANN, Ch'n.

The body decided to meet with the church at Cedar Pond.

A motion was carried to suspend the regular order of business for the purpose of discussing the propriety of changing the 7th and 13th Articles of the Decorum. After thorough discussion the body decided to change the 7th Article so as to increase the number of delegates and the 13th so as to give the Moderator power to grant leaves of absence when necessary.

The Committee on Nominations appoint John Stuart to preach the Introductory Sermon at the next Session.

H. SEWELL, Ch'n.

Upon motion by J. T. Mann, hereafter ministers, when present, shall be considered delegates by virtue of their office.

Report on Missions read, and pending its adoption, very forcible speeches were made by A. P. Ashurst and others. The report was adopted.

Report on Missions.

Your Committee on Missions report briefly that when members of the church pay a few dollars to their preacher they think they do well, and there is a prevailing impression among many professed followers of Christ that when they have done this much they have discharged all the pecuniary obligations they, as Christians, owe. There are many churches that contribute nothing outside of this special object, and some of them fail in this. They contribute nothing for missions. If there is a field in this Christian land where missionary labors are needed more than another, and where the services of a good missionary could be had, and where but little sacrifice is necessary to be made, it is in our Association.

Far back in the annals of eternity ere man was made or the earth was formed, missions had their origin. God saw long before he made man and endowed him with immortal attributes, that he would fall from his high estate, and the plan of redemption was adopted in the Councils of Divine Wisdom ere the stars sang together for joy. The father had compassion on man in his prospectively ruined state—a state without hope in this life as in the life to come—and the enquiry arose in the Divine Council, "Whom shall we send, and who will go for us?" Then the Son, the dearly beloved of the Father, responded, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O, God!" The offering was accepted. The father spared not his own Son, delivered him up for us all. Thus, and then was the Lamb "slain from before the foundation of the world." Thus before time began, was laid the foundation of all Christian missions—a foundation resting upon the love of the Father, for a guilty, lost and ruined race. To be a Christian is to be Christ-like, or like Christ. Inasmuch as Christ came to save the lost, the Christian, who is like Christ, must seek to do the same thing. The command to every one who is born into this kingdom is, "Go work to-day in my vineyard."

If Christ was the first missionary—the great missionary—if every disciple is a missionary, what can the church be but a missionary? Who can claim for it less than this without putting the candle-stick of the Lord under a bushel? The Church is founded on Christ; Church is the rock upon which her foundation rests—and if Christ was a missionary, the Church cannot be less. She is the Lamb's wife, and it is ever the pleasure of the bride to do the will of the bridegroom. She is the light of the world, and it is her duty to let that light shine that others may see it and come to Christ. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That as we are members of the family of God, and of the household of faith, that we make our Father's interest our interest, and that each member of this Association, and each member of the churches forming this Association make it his religious duty to contribute something, however little, each year for missions.

2d, That each pastor and deacon of the respective churches bring this great subject repeatedly before the brethren until they shall be better instructed in this solemn duty.

3d, That at each minister's and deacon's meeting the brethren be requested to make this a prominent matter of discussion.

A. P. ASHURST, Ch'n.

4
Report of Executive Committee.

Report of the Executive Committee read and adopted:

Your Executive Committee would report that pursuant to instructions from the body, they made arrangements with the Principal of the School in Marianna, Florida, for the tuition of Bro. Herring for five months. Bro. Herring, we think, made considerable progress for the short time he went, and think the fifteen dollars spent in that direction well spent. We also gave Bro. Herring \$25 to help supply his necessities while going. Thus briefly is told all that your Executive Committee has done the past associational year. Respectfully,
W. J. DANIEL, Ch'n.

Report on Finance read and adopted.

Treasurer's report adopted.

A motion to reconsider a resolution passed at the last meeting of this body in regard to Sabbath collections and pledges, was lost.

The body elected their present Executive Committee for the ensuing year by acclamation.

Resolved, That the thanks of this body be tendered to the citizens of Greenwood and vicinity for their kindness and hospitality during our session.

The body agreed to pay the Clerk \$21.25 for his services, and instructed him to have 500 copies of Minutes printed.

After the Brethren gave each other the parting hand, the Body adjourned to meet with the Church at Cedar Pond, nine miles east of Greenwood, on Saturday before the third Sabbath in October, 1878.

REPORT ON FINANCE.

Sent up from—	Minutes.	Assoc'nal.
Antioch, Calhoun county,	\$1 00	\$1 00
Bethlehem, Jackson county,	1 50	2 00
Bethesda,	1 00	
Cedar Pond, Jackson county,	2 00	7 85
Campbellton, Jackson county,		17 00
Concord, Jackson county,	95	
Christian Hope		
Damascus	1 00	2 00
Flat Creek, Gadsden county	1 00	75
Ephesus, Jackson county	1 00	5 00
Friendship, Jackson county	1 50	3 00
Greenwood, Jackson county	2 00	20 50
Hickory Level, Jackson county	1 00	2 20
Mt. Olive, Jackson county	1 00	4 25
Memphis, Henry county, Ala.,	1 00	50
Mt. Pleasant, Jackson county, Fla.,	1 00	50
Orange Hill, Washington county, Fla.,	50	
Poplar Spring, Jackson county, Fla.,	75	1 75
Providence, Jackson county, Fla.,	2 25	1 20
Paradise Grove, Jackson county, Fla.,	1 00	50
Rocky Grove, Jackson county, Fla.,	50	1 60
Rehoboth, Geneva county, Ala.,	1 00	
Sardis, Jackson county, Fla.,	2 00	2 00
Selma, Geneva county, Ala.,	1 25	1 25
	\$26 20	\$74 85
Total, \$101 05.		E. N. DEKLE, Chairman.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

THE WEST FLORIDA ASSOCIATION,

In Account with J. W. GODWIN, Treasurer.

By amount on hand at last meeting,	\$136 40
To amount paid Clerk for his services,	\$21 25
To amount paid E. Phillips for tuition,	15 40
To amount paid A. R. Herring for incidental expenses,	25 00
To amount paid for printing Minutes,	15 00
By amount on hand to Balance	59 75
	\$136 40

J. W. GODWIN, Treasurer.

LIST OF PLEDGES DUE NEXT ASSOCIATION.

J. H. Stephens,	\$10 00	Mrs. M. E. Hinson,	\$5 00
W. J. Daniel,	10 00	Mrs. Josie Daniel,	5 00
Jas. C. Collier,	10 00	Wm. C. Dickson,	5 00
Miss Mollie Burnes,	10 00	J. A. Daniel,	5 00
E. N. Dekle,	10 00	D. A. Skipper,	2 50
Mrs. Ammie Hinson,	10 00	J. M. Stephens,	2 50
W. H. Taylor,	5 00	J. B. Henderson,	2 50
N. B. Long,	5 00	A. J. Sullivan,	2 50
W. A. Gainer,	5 00	James Hatcher,	2 50
J. Lynn,	5 00	Robt. Jones,	2 50
Mrs. J. Collier,	5 00	Jacob Williford,	2 50
Mrs. S. C. Daniel,	5 00	J. H. Gabriel,	1 00
Mrs. B. A. Hinson,	5 00	H. L. Lizenby,	1 00
James Cotton,	5 00	Council Jarman,	1 00
John Cloud,	5 00	J. A. Johnson,	1 00
A. Bevis,	5 00	K. White,	1 00

DECORUM.

Art. 1. Those members who are regularly chosen by the Churches in our union shall compose the Association.

Art. 2. The members so chosen shall produce letters from their respective Churches certifying their appointment together with their number in fellowship, those baptised, received by letter, restored, dismissed, excommunicated and dead, since the last Association. Also, a statement of the amount of funds sent up by the delegates, and for what purpose, and any other contribution made during the year.

Art. 3. The members thus chosen and convened shall be denominated the WEST FLORIDA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

Art. 4. The Association shall have a Moderator and Clerk, who shall be chosen by the members present.

Art. 5. This Association shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor by which she can infringe upon any of the Internal rights of the Churches.

Art. 6. If newly constituted Churches, or others, desire to be admitted into this union, they shall petition by letter and delegates, and if found, upon examination, to be orthodox and orderly, shall be received by the Association and such reception shall be manifested by the Moderator giving to the delegates the right hand of fellowship.

Art. 7. Each Church in this Association shall be entitled to two delegates, and when her number of members shall reach twenty-five she shall be entitled to three, and for every additional increase of twenty-five members she shall be entitled to an additional delegate.

Art. 8. Every query sent to the Association by any of the Churches in this union shall be read and put to a vote by the Moderator, whether it shall be discussed, and if there be a majority for discussion, it shall be taken up and considered; if not, it shall be withdrawn; provided always, that those be first considered which affect the union of the Church.

Art. 9. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the observation of the Association, except it be withdrawn by the member who made it. The last motion shall be first in order.

Art. 10. Every person who speaks in debate shall rise from his seat and address the Moderator, and shall not be interrupted while speaking, except he depart from the subject.

Art. 11. No person shall speak more than three times on the same subject, without permission from the Association.

Art. 12. There shall be no talking or whispering in time of public speech, nor shall any reflection be cast upon the speaker.

Art. 13. No member shall absent himself from the Association without first obtaining permission from the body or Moderator, and the Moderator shall only have power to act, while the body is not in session. The Association is not considered closed until after the farewell sermon is preached.

Art. 14. If any member shall break the rules of this Constitution he shall be immediately reprov'd by the Moderator.

Art. 15. It is the business of the Association, 1st, to provide for the general union of the Churches; 2d, to keep up a correspondence with Associations of the same faith and order; that the chain of communication may be preserved among the Churches; 3d, to give the Churches the best advice in matters of difficulty, and if the communion between any of the sister Churches be broken, to inquire into the cause of the breach and use the best means to remove the difficulty, but if the breach cannot be made up, to withdraw from any Church whom they shall look upon as unsound in principle or disorderly in practice, until she be reclaimed; 4th, to admit any of the brethren in the ministry as assistants, if they shall deem it to be necessary; 5th, to appoint a Clerk to keep the records of every meeting of the Association, and to see that he is properly remunerated for his service; 6th, to have the Minutes read and corrected, if need be, before the Association rises, and have them printed if they think proper; 7th, to amend this plan of government at any time when a majority of the Association shall deem it necessary; 8th, to adjourn to any time and place considered most proper.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

Art. 1. We believe in the existence of one only true and living God, that He has made himself known to His people under the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—Exodus xx chap., v. 3; Isaiah, ix chap. v. 6; Matthew, xxviii chap. v. 19.

Art. 2. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.—2nd Peter, i chap. v. 21; Acts, i chap. v. 16; 2d Timothy, iii chap. v. 16, 17.

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 predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of His Will.—Matthew, xiv chap. v. 31; John, xv chap. v. 16, 19; Acts, xiii chap. v. 48.

Art. 4. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.—Genesis, vi chap. v. 5; Romans, vi chap. v. 20; Ephesians, ii chap. v. 1, 3.

Art. 5. We believe in man's incompetency to recover himself from the fallen state he is in by nature, by his own will and ability.—John, vi chap. v. 44; Romans, xi chap. v. 6, Ephesians, ii chap. v. 8, 9.

Art. 6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed righteousness of Christ.—Jeremiah, xxiii chap. v. 6; Romans, iii chap. v. 21, 26; Romans, viii chap. v. 9, 10.

Art. 7. We believe that God's elect shall be called, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.—John, vi chap. v. 63; John, xvi chap. v. 13, 14; 1st Corinthians, ii chap. v. 10, 12.

Art. 8. We believe that nothing can separate the true believer from the love of God, but that they will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.—John, vi chap. v. 37; Philippians, i chap. v. 6; John, x chap. v. 28, 30.

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.—Matthew, iii chap. v. 5, 9; Romans, vi chap. v. 4, 5; 1st Corinthians, xv chap. v. 29.

Art. 10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a general judgment.—1st Corinthians, xv chap. v. 20, 23; Matthew, xxv chap. v. 32, 33; Revelations, xx chap. v. 12.

Art. 11. We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting, and the joys of the righteous eternal.—Matthew, xxv chap. v. 46.

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 full fellowship in the church of which he is a member.—Hebrews, v chap. v. 4, 1st Timothy, v chap. v. 14.

STATISTICS OF THE CHURCHES.

CHURCHES AND COUNTIES.	PASTORS:	CLERKS AND THEIR POST-OFFICES.	Baptised,	Rec'd by Letter..	Dismissed,	Excom municated	Dead,	Total
Antioch, Calhoun County, Fla.,	R. Kidd	C. C. Barber, West Winton, Fla.,	0	1	0	0	0	20
Bethlehem, Jackson County, Fla.,	J. W. Johnson	John Harper, Marianna, Fla.,	0	4	0	3	1	42
Bethesda, Geneva County, Ala.,	P. Keizer	L. M. Davis, Big Creek, Ala.,	3	6	0	0	1	36
Concord, Jackson County, Fla.,	J. W. Johnson	W. A. Elmore, Campbellton, Fla.,	11	6	0	0	3	31
Campbellton, Jackson County, Fla.,	T. E. Langley	W. J. Daniel, Campbellton, Fla.,	0	1	0	2	2	1
Cedar Pond, Jackson County, Fla.,	T. E. Langley	H. C. Neel, Nell's Landing, Fla.,	0	2	0	0	0	58
Damascus, Jackson County, Fla.,	J. Stuart	J. J. White, Campbellton, Fla.,	14	5	11	2	0	67
Epheesus, Jackson County, Fla.,	J. W. Johnson	Moses Christmas, Campbellton, Fla.,	4	1	0	5	0	1
Friendship, Jackson County, Fla.,	T. E. Langley	L. Dekle, Greenwood, Fla.,	1	1	1	3	0	1
Fiat Creek, Gadsden Co., Fla.,	J. T. Mann	S. N. Sheppard, Chattahoochee, Fla.,	0	6	0	2	2	1
Greenwood, Jackson Co., Fla.,	T. E. Langley	N. B. Long, Greenwood, Fla.,	11	3	3	0	1	0
Hickory Level, Jackson Co., Fla.,	J. Stuart	S. Pomphrey, Marianna, Fla.,	0	2	0	0	1	1
Mt. Olive, Calhoun Co., Fla.,	A. R. Herring	J. H. Gabriel, Chipola, Fla.,	0	3	0	0	1	1
Memphis, Henry Co., Ala.,	S. Williford	J. P. Conner, Big Creek, Fla.,	0	0	0	0	1	32
Orange Hill, Washington Co., Fla.,	T. S. Dean	R. W. Peef, Orange Hill, Fla.,	4	1	3	0	2	0
Rocky Grove, Jackson Co., Fla.,	J. Stuart	C. Dykes, Marianna, Fla.,	4	1	3	0	2	0
Paradise Grove, Jackson Co., Fla.,	R. Kidd	Z. Johnson, Circle Hill, Fla.,	3	5	2	0	0	1
Providence, Jackson Co., Fla.,	R. C. B. Lawrence	J. T. Allen, Haywood's Landing, Fla.,	0	2	2	0	0	1
Poplar Spring, Jackson Co., Fla.,	J. C. Skipper	S. Martin, Dothier, Henry Co., Ala.,	5	6	0	1	4	0
Selma, Geneva Co., Ala.,	D. Skipper	J. J. Creamer, Campbellton, Fla.,	11	3	6	3	3	0
Mt. Pleasant, Jackson Co., Fla.,	R. Kidd	G. W. Goodson, Circle Hill,	5	3	2	4	7	0
Sardis, Jackson Co., Fla.,	J. C. Skipper		4	2	0	0	0	44
Rhoboth, Jack-on Co., Fla.,			92	68	19	36	32	11
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