

MINUTES

OF THE

THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

West Florida Baptist Association

HELD WITH THE

CHURCH AT DAMASCUS,

Commencing October 19th, A. D. 1879.

SAMPSON LIBRARY  
JOHN B. STETSON UNIVERSITY  
DeLAND ❖ FLORIDA

COLUMBUS, GA:

Daily Times Job Rooms Print.

1880.

## MINUTES.

---

In consequence of the excessive rain, only a few of the Messengers of the WEST FLORIDA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION met pursuant to adjournment. At the request of those that met, Elder Robert Kid preached on Saturday night; and on Sabbath the Association met, and according to previous appointment, the Introductory Sermon was preached by Eld. A P Ashurst, from St. Luke 23d chapter, and from the 23d to 43d verses inclusive. The penitent thief upon the cross being the theme.

After refreshments and one and a half hours intermission the Messengers were requested to assemble in the church-house, and after doing so they were called to order by the former Moderator. The brethren present bearing letters handed them in and they were read by Elders A P Ashurst and Wm. M Farrier, and the following messengers enrolled:

Bethlehem—J W Rawls, H G Land.

Bethesda—Burrell Register, S Franklin and J Simmons.

Campbellton—J C Collier, J T Baldwin, W J Daniel.

Damascus—King White, G W Phillips, J Miller, J J Elmore.

Cedar Pond—R Kid, C C Avery.

Ephesus—J Christmas.

Friendship—J Lynn, J M Stephens.

Greenwood—A P Ashurst, T E Langley.

Mt. Pleasant—Jno. Parish, J A Sharpe.

Orange Hill—F M Motes, J Sowell.

Ten of the churches composing the Association failed to be represented by either letter or Messengers.

After the reading of the letters and enrolling of the the Messengers the body proceeded to permanent organization and elected T E Langley, Moderator, W J Daniels, Clerk.

During the organization Elder D A Skipper preached at the stand. Correspondence from other bodies was called for, there being no respondents the Moderator proceeded to the appointment of the following Committees:

ON DOCUMENTS—J Stuart, J N Parish, Burrell Register.

ON DECEASED MINISTERS—R Kid, S Franklin, F M Motes.

ON NOMINATIONS—J W Rawls, J Simmons, J M Christmas.

ON MISSIONS—A P Ashurst, J C Collier, W J Daniel.

ON PREACHING—J C Collier, K White, J Miller, J W Rawls.

ON FINANCE—J Lynn, J J Elmore, J M Stephens.

ON SABBATH SCHOOLS—J T Baldwin, H G Land, J Sowell.

On motion it was agreed that delegates from churches not represented by letter be allowed seats in the body; and that the Clerk procure the names of absent delegates, together with the amounts appropriated by the churches not represented; and have them appear in the Minutes; also notify said churches to send said amounts to the Treasurer of the Association.

The Committee on Preaching reported that Elder J Stuart would preach to-night.

On motion the body adjourned to meet at 9 o'clock to-morrow (Monday) morning.

#### MONDAY MORNING, 9 O'CLOCK.

The Association met, and was called to order by the Moderator.

On motion the reading of the Minutes was dispensed with until the close of the session.

Renewed the call for correspondence—none present.

The following correspondents were appointed:

To THE JUDSON ASSOCIATION—J Lynn, J W Rawls, D A Skipper, T E Langley.

To THE NEWTON ASSOCIATION.—J C Collier, T E Langley, W J Daniel.

The Committee on Documents made the following report:

#### REPORT ON DOCUMENTS:

That both Friendship and Orange Hill churches ask to entertain the next session of your body, and that we recommend that the sense of the body be taken by vote as to which church the Association will meet with. The vote was taken by rising, and decided to meet with Orange Hill church.

The Committee on Nominations made their report through their Chairman J W Rawls, and appointed Elder D A Skipper to preach the Introductory Sermon at the next session.

The report on Deceased Ministers was read and adopted as follows:

#### REPORT ON DECEASED MINISTERS:

Your Committee on Deceased Ministers feel very thankful to God to be permitted another year to report no deaths among our ministerial brethren, and in view of the fact that the field is exceedingly large and the laborers VERY VERY few in this part of his moral vineyard; let us as an Association at all times, both separately and collectively, render thanksgivings to our Heavenly Father for this special manifestation of his divine goodness.

The Report on Missions was called for, and upon motion the Clerk was instructed to have the report made at the last session of the Association republished.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:

Report on Missions read and pending its adoption, stirring speeches were made by T E Langley and A P Ashurst, the report was adopted and is as below:

The Committee are impressed with the necessity for enlarging our efforts to "preach the gospel to every creature." It is useless to consider the question of missions without considering the question of money. We have got the men the money is what we need.

All our people are able to give, and when we consider the divine law of giving, all are equally able to give. The law of Christ applies as much to the poor as to the rich, and promises as great blessings shall be enjoyed by the giver of the one class as that of the other. It is required of a man to give according to what he has, and not according to what he has not. The Master does not state the amount to be given by any one, but teaches the principle by which every giver may piously determine the amount he owes to the cause, when he says "Give and it shall be given to you again." He does not say, "Give largely and it shall be given to you again." When He declares "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He does not hint as to the amount which secures the blessing;

but the principles laid down in His word are to govern it. If we would secure the cause of Christ the amount needed, and now required at our hands, we must adopt plans more scriptural than those we have practiced heretofore for reaching the masses of our people. We must regard as acceptable to God, and profitable to His cause every cheerful gift, however small.

Heretofore our plan has been a few liberal givers give all we raise for missions. This is wrong.

There is more or less of discouragement experienced by the liberal givers, when they find that they have all the burden to carry, while the multitude will not touch it even with their fingers. If all were to lend a hand, those who are liberal would be more liberal, and in doing more they would enjoy more, and receive greater blessings. As it is, they are oppressed with a sense of injustice; they feel that they are wronged; and they are soured toward their brethren, and so far from being incited to greater efforts, when the inaction of others would seem to make it necessary, they are actually restrained from doing what their hearts would incline them to do, and indignant to see no contributions from others, pettishly diminish their own. Of course they ought not to indulge such feelings, but they do indulge them. They are good men, it is true, but they are men, and like others subject to human weakness. Any plan must be wrong, the great feature of which is that it places such temptations in their way.

Again, we appeal to one to do so much on the ground that some other has done so much. The principle is wrong, whether others have done much or little, it is not for a man to inquire. Let him answer as unto God, and not as unto man. Emulation and pride are not to be appealed to in a Christian assembly. The appeal should be to the conscience, and to that only. Let them be told to do it, because God has required it at their hands, and what they do under this impulse they will never afterwards regret; their nature will be developed in the right direction and not the wrong, and the act will be genuine christian charity, and not a wretched counterfeit of it.

To sum up the whole matter let it be said that a habit of systematic and liberal giving on proper principles in the cause of Christ is beneficial to the heart of every christian, and that without this habit leanness and disease are certain, and life is apt to be so feeble that it can scarcely be distinguished from death. The great majority of our brethren are in the latter condition; and the charge against our plans which have worked out such results as these, that they bring evil upon the individual, is established.

Again the churches suffer injury. A church whose membership suffers in the manner described is in the condition of a man broken on the wheel. His legs are broken, he cannot walk; his arms are broken, he cannot do; his ribs are broken, he can scarcely breathe; his back is broken he cannot stir.

To suppose that the figure is too strong is to suppose that the whole of a thing can be in good condition when its parts are all destroyed.

Take away the membership of our churches and there is nothing left. Suppose all the members of a church to be under the blight of covetousness, what will the church be worth as a whole? Suppose a large part of them to be so, and that a few only are found in the way of duty, how are the efforts of those few clogged and made comparatively inactive by the dead weight of the many! Hampered with a worse than useless membership, unblessed by an anti-missionary spirit, how can a church be other than languid, drooping and dying, if not dead? Many of our churches are in this condition. We have many churches in condition not

so bad, though their affliction is of the same kind. But according to the degree of their disease, so wretched is their internal state, and so worthless are they to the cause.

If this condition of our churches is owing to any action or inaction of ours, have we not great guilt to answer for? And is it not clear that if our missionary efforts had been guided by greater wisdom; even if with more zeal, we should not have left the masses of our people wholly unreached? While those who do nothing are each and all to blame, may it not be true that they have not been taught to give, and instructed in the power there is in little. They are ashamed to lay their little mite by the side of the dollars of the more wealthy class. Now the poor form a large portion of our membership. Can a church as a whole be thrifty when so large an element in its membership are not used?

But finally, we are instructed how to give. In writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit says: "Now, concerning the collections for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, LET EVERY ONE of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." 1st Cor. xviii:2.

Observe that this is not a mere matter of advice—it is an ORDER. The Apostle says, I have given ORDER.

Mark, also, that the periods of giving are not only regular, but they are frequent; and this very frequency would bring the duty down from the high atmosphere of exciting enthusiasm to the less exhilarating but more healthy air of daily life. Not once a year but once a week is the New Testament method. Before the heart has time to grow cold from one act of beneficence another warms it up again; and thus if the stream be small, it is nevertheless steady, and while it conveys blessings out, also brings blessings in, for it is more blessed to give than to receive. Note, also, that the command is to all: "LET EVERY ONE of you lay by him in store." No man, woman or child is excepted. We seem to forget that giving is an act of worship, and that consequently, in the absence of giving no worship can be complete. There are some who seem to think that because the Gospel is free in one sense, it is so in every sense and should cost them nothing; and some go even further and imagine that to couple money with worship, or with the Lord's cause in any way, is to degrade it. It may be well to remember that the day divinely appointed is Sabbath, "the first day of the week;" also the very first act of worship of which we have any record was an expressive one. There was no money in the world at the time of righteous Abel's sacrifice, but it cost him money's worth and it was accepted. Has God so changed that what was acceptable then would not be now? The Mosaic ritual was, perhaps, the most expensive system of religion ever devised; and God was the author of it. Did he not know what was acceptable to himself, and as He was not made richer by these offerings, nor benefitted by them in any way must He not have required them for the benefit of the worshipper? And has human nature so changed that what was promotive of spiritual welfare then should fail to promote it now? Outward acts, indeed, may vary with circumstances; but so far as principles are involved, they must for ever be the same. "Honor the Lord with thy substance" is a divine precept, and is it not binding on all men for all time? If certain men and certain times are to be made exceptions, who is competent to designate the exceptions?

Those who contend in these latter days, that all our giving should be to the poor, are not the first who have made this plea; they follow a bad precedent set by a bad example.

The alabaster box itself expensive, was filled with costly ointment; both had been purchased with money, but the offering was graciously ac-

cepted, and as the house was filled with the perfume of the offering, so the whole world has been filled with the fragrance of the story; and the memorial in honor of the act will endure to the end of time. No poor were benefitted, nor in a certain sense was there benefit of any kind, BUT CHRIST WAS HONORED.

Are we precluded from the privilege of honoring the Saviour in the same way? Let some Iscariot count up the expense, and whine about the poor, but as for us, let us weep for joy to think we are permitted to bring the alabaster box and the precious ointment. What was worship then is worship now. And if giving be worship, then, like all other worship it should be at stated times, and the times should be not far apart; and we should give without ceasing, as we are taught to pray without ceasing.

Certain it is, that our worship will be forever imperfect, unless our "substance" enters into it, and if we be at a loss to know at what periods and on what occasions to make these offerings, do we not find something more than a hint in these words: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

The time must come when all the elect will come up to help the Lord. Let us be in haste to bring about the advent of that glorious day; and if our beginnings be small, we have the rapture of knowing that the end will be, that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

A. P. ASHURST,  
W. J. DANIEL,  
T. A. PARRAMORE.

On motion Elder A. P. Ashurst was appointed to write during the next Associational Year, a circular letter and send a copy to each church in the Association, setting forth the duty of christians as regards Missions.

The Chairman of the Committee on Sabbath Schools made the following report:

#### REPORT ON SABBATH SCHOOLS:

Your Committee on Sabbath Schools beg leave to report that the Sabbath School interest in our Association is somewhat improving; while the improvement is very slight, yet, it is encouraging. We are able to report one school as being in successful operation during the entire year, and others a part of the year. We hope that the time is not far distant when those that only last a part of the year will hold on the year through, and those churches that have never had schools will try them. We regard it as much the duty of christians to instruct themselves and their children in God's Word as any other christian duty, and when they neglect to do it they certainly incur God's displeasure.

Respectfully,

J. T. BALDWIN, Chm'n.

The Chairman of the Executive Committee made the following report:

#### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

That on account of the scanty means in hand with which to procure Missionary labor, your Committee did not think it advisable to open up a new field for that kind of work, and having begun a work on the east side of the Chipola river, during the last Associational year, they thought it best to continue their efforts in that direction and consequently contracted with Elder R. C. B. Lawrence to continue his labors at the same points he did during last year; which he has done to the best of his ability; and for which we gave him the small amount the Association had on hand after paying the current expenses of the last session.

A. P. ASHURST, Chm'n.

SAMPSON LIBRARY  
JOHN B. STETSON UNIVERSITY  
DeLAND  
FLORIDA

The Association went into election of Executive Committee for the ensuing year, and elected A P Ashurst, Treas., J Lynn, J W Rawls, H Oswald and W F Nobles.

Both the report of the Finance Committee and Treasurer were submitted to the Association and approved. For report of Finance Committee (see Appendix A.) and of the Treasurer's report (see Appendix B).

A Committee consisting of R Kidd, John Stuart and John White was appointed to designate churches in the Association with which fifth Sunday meetings should be held during the next year. The first meeting comes on the 5th Sunday in— at Friendship church. The second in— at Campbellton church. The third in— at Rocky Grove church.

The following resolutions of thanks as offered by Elder D A Skipper was adopted :

Resolved, That we tender our sincere and heartfelt thanks to the good people of Damascus church, and vicinity for their kindness and hospitality during our stay among them.

Time was allowed T E Langley and W J Daniel to represent the interest of the Christian Index published in Atlanta, Ga.

The Association appropriated twenty dollars with which to have Minutes printed, also, fifteen dollars to pay the Clerk for his services; and adjourned to meet with the Orange Hill church, on Saturday before the 3d Sabbath in October 1880.

T. E. LANGLEY, MODERATOR.

W. J. DANIEL, CLERK.

(APPENDIX A.)

Sent up from :	Miss'ns.	Minutes.	Ass'nal.
Bethlehem.....	\$ 2 00	1 50	2 50
Bethesda.....	1 00	1 00	
Campbellton.....	24 30	2 50	
Cedar Pond.....	2 65	2 00	3 00
Damascus.....		1 00	1 50
Ephesus.....		1 00	50
Friendship.....	3 00	1 50	1 00
Greenwood.....	15 80	2 00	2 00
Hickory Level.....	1 95	50	1 00
Mt. Pleasant.....		1 00	1 00
Orange Hill.....		1 00	
Providence.....		2 00	
Paradise Grove.....		1 00	
Rehoboth.....		1 00	
Rocky Grove.....		1 30	
Magnolia.....		1 00	
	\$49 70	\$21 30	\$12 50

JOSEPH LYNN, Chm'n.

(APPENDIX B).

Oct. 20.	By am't turned over to me at last Association.....	\$111 45
Apl. 1.	To am't paid for printing and clerk's fees.....	\$30 00
" 1.	To am't paid R C B Lawrence, missionary.....	35 00
" 1.	To am't promised R C B Lawrence by Ex. Com. and still in my hand to his credit..	46 45
		\$111 45

A. P. ASHURST, Chm'n.

7  
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, 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 reproved 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 communion 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 services; 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.—Edodus xx chap., v. 3; Isalah, 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.—2d 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; Phillipians, 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.	Total.....
Bethlehem, Jackson Co., Fla.	D. A. Skipper.	J. W. Harper, Marianna.	1 42
Bethesda, Geneva Co., Ala.	J. J. White.	J. M. Davis, Big Creek.	1 43
Campbellton, Jackson Co., Fla.	T. E. Langley.	W. J. Daniel, Campbellton.	0 47
Cedar Pond, Jackson Co., Fla.	A. P. Ashurst.	W. H. Pyke, Neal's Landing.	0 57
Damascus, Jackson Co., Fla.	J. J. White.	W. W. Parker, Campbellton.	1 59
Ephesus, Jackson Co., Fla.	J. W. Johnson.	Moses Christmas, Campbellton.	1 00
Friendship, Jackson Co., Fla.	A. P. Ashurst.	L. Dekle, Greenwood.	1 00
Greenwood, Jackson Co., Fla.	F. E. Langley.	N. B. Long, Greenwood.	2 00
Hickory Level, Jackson Co., Fla.	J. Stuart.	S. Pomphrey, Marianna.	0 54
Mt. Pleasant, Jackson Co., Fla.	D. A. Skipper.	J. Balley, Campbellton.	1 30
Orange Hill, Washington Co., Fla.	J. W. Johnson.	R. N. Peel, Orange Hill.	0 49
Providence, Jackson Co., Fla.		W. H. Nobles, Haywood's Landing.	0 26
Paradise Grove, Jackson Co., Fla.	R. C. B. Lawrence.	J. T. Allen, Haywood's Landing.	1 40
Behoboth, Geneva Co., Ala.	J. C. Skipper.	W. J. Smith, Big Creek.	3 24
			5341 11 15 38 9 592