

10007

MINUTES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SO. FLA. BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

According to the adjournment of the Association of Churches, located in South Florida, held with Shiloh Church, on Monday last, an adjourned meeting convened with Bethel Church, in the county, on Friday, 6th of December, 1867.

After an introductory, preached by Elder Samuel Craft, the Convention was opened by singing and prayer. Elder Craft, the former Chairman, in the chair and Elder Todd acting as Clerk.

After the appointment of Brothers Todd, Sloan and Gasey, as a committee to prepare and report a Constitution, and Articles of Faith, for the organization of the Association, and a temporary preaching committee, adjourned to meet at 9 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

SATURDAY, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

Bro. Todd, for the committee appointed on yesterday, reported the Constitution and Articles of Faith herewith published, marked "A" and "B" and which being adopted, the Chairman officially announced the organization of the Association, under the name and title of the SOUTH FLORIDA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, twelve churches being represented by members, as seen by the statistical table attached to the same.

On calling for regular officers, Elder S. B. Todd was elected Moderator and Elder Sam. C. Craft, Clerk.

Invited ministers of our faith and order to seats.

Appointed Bro. Sloan, Lewis and Casey a committee on preaching.

Articles of Decorum, herewith published, marked "C" were adopted.

Bro. Wilder and Gaskins were appointed a committee on finance.

Bro. Craft, Wilson and Gasey were appointed a committee to draft a brief address to the public and especially, to be Christian public on the objects of our organization; which committee, after conference and deliberation, submitted their report, herewith appended, marked "D."

The preaching committee report Bro. Todd to preach the introductory sermon, at 11 o'clock, to-morrow, to previously arrange that Bro. Craft preach in the forenoon, in conclusion by Bro. Wilson. Bro. Wilson was appointed to preach the next introductory sermon, Bro. Cross, alternate. Bro. Craft was appointed to preach the next introductory sermon, Bro. Heyman alternate.

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8. Ordered, That Brothers Craft, Case, Todd, Polk, J. M. Hayman, Sloan, M. Wilson, Anderson, William Hayman, Hendry, M. Whidden and A. Wilson, be appointed a committee to enquire into the spiritual wants and destitution within the bounds of this Association, and to ascertain, if possible, and report to this Association, at its next session, the best method by which, that want can be applied. They are urged by the worth of souls to use every energy and to adopt every practicable means to meet the demands of the spiritual condition of the country. And in the meantime, if they are justified in doing so, to engage in the Missionary work, to send forth laborers therefor, and to conduct and control all the affairs of the same during the interim of our meetings.

9. Ordered, That the next meetings during the next associational year, commencing on the first Sabbath before each fifth Sabbath: the first to be held with the First Church, commencing on Friday 27th inst. and that the Missionary committee be requested to hold a business meeting in connection with each Union meeting.

10. Ordered, That the thanks of this body be tendered to the Brethren, Sisters and friends in this community, for their kind hospitality to us during our sojourn in their midst.

11. The committee on Finance submitted the report, marked "E."

12. Brother Lewis was appointed Treasurer of the Association.

13. Ordered, That 300 copies of the minutes of this session, be published and that the Clerk receive \$25 for his services, in preparing the same for the press.

Resolved, That Elder S. B. Todd, our Moderator, be most cordially recommended to the members of THE FLORIDA BAPTIST CONFERENCE, as a proper and suitable Evangelist, for the State at large, if he should be called to undertake the arduous labors.

Adjourned to meet with Pine Creek church, at Bartow, on Friday before the first Sabbath in October 1865.

S. B. TODD, Moderator.

SAM. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

A

Constitution of the South Florida Baptist Association.

1. This Association shall be known by the name of the SOUTH FLORIDA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

2. The Association shall be composed of members chosen by the respective churches in its union, not to exceed two delegates from each church, who shall be duly authorized by letter to represent the churches attending them.

3. In the letters sent by the churches at each session of the Association, shall be expressed their respective members in full fellowship, and those expelled, received by letter, restored, excommunicated and read, since the last session.

4. Believing it to be proper, on account of the diversity of opinion among men, as to the import of the doctrines contained in the New Testament, to declare our views and understanding thereof, we therefore append our belief in the following Articles, together with a few scriptural references in support of each, and present them, with our

minutes, to the christian world, and especially to the Baptist community, and ask the candid, pious and impartial investigation of all thereof.

5. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by a regular and proper decorum. A Moderator and a Clerk shall be chosen by the votes of the members present, who shall hold their offices till the next session of the body, and until their successors are elected. The Moderator shall preside at the meetings of the Association, and the Clerk shall record the proceedings thereof and prepare them for the press.

6. The Association, thus organized, shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor infringe upon the internal rights of any church.

7. Churches may be admitted into this union on application by letter and delegation; and if upon examination, found to be orthodox, shall be received by the Association, and the right hand of fellowship extended to the delegates by the Moderator.

8. The Association shall furnish the churches with the minutes of their proceedings, in proportion to the funds sent up, by each church, for that purpose.

9. The minutes of the Association shall be publicly and distinctly read (and corrected, if necessary) and then signed by the Moderator and Clerk, before the adjournment of each session.

10. Any amendment or alteration of this Constitution may be made by the votes of two thirds of the members present, at any regular meeting of the Association. (of which notice shall have been given in the minutes of the preceding session) and the concurrence of two thirds of the members present at the next Association shall make the desired alteration. All other matters of the Association shall be decided by a majority of votes.

11. The Association shall have power, 1st. To provide for the general union of the churches. 2d. To give the churches advice in matters of discipline. 3d. To enquire into the course of any church failing to be represented at the meetings of the Association. 4th. To withdraw all connection from any church or churches in this union, that shall violate the rules of this Association, or shall deviate from the orthodox principles of the revealed word of God, or shall become unsound in faith or in practice, or shall suffer any member thereof, to do those things forbidden by the faith and practice of the great Baptist family of the world. 5. To appropriate the tithes contributed to the Association fund, by the Churches, or by individuals, to any purpose they may think the best for the interest of the cause of Christ within our own bounds. 6. To adjourn to any future time and place deemed most convenient to the Churches in the Union.

S. B. TODD, Moderator.

SAM. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

B

Articles of Faith.

ART. 1. We believe in one only true and living God; and that there are three persons in the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Isa. 45: 22, 23, 5: 46: 9, 1st. Kings, 8: 60, Joel 2: 27, Mat. 28: 19, 2nd. Cor. 13: 14, Isa. 4: 8, 16, Jno. 14: 16, Mat. 3: 16, 17, Jno

business—a motion to adjourn—a motion to read a paper—a motion to reconsider, and all motions relating to the order of business should be promptly put by the Moderator, allowing no debate—subject, however, to an appeal to the body.

16. Any member may call for a division of a question, when the substance will admit of it.

17. Any member voting in the majority, may move a reconsideration of the subject at any time during the then present session.

18. Every resolution shall receive two statements or readings before its passage—the first for information, and the second before the vote is taken.

19. These rules may be changed or amended at any regular and full meeting of the Association.

20. The Moderator shall cause the Association, each day, to be opened and closed with prayer.

21. All queries shall be fairly stated in writing and approved by two thirds of the members present, before they shall be acted on.

S. B. TODD, Mod'r.

SAM. C. CRAFT, Clerk.

APPENDIX.

REPORT D.

The committee appointed to report upon the object of our organization, beg leave to submit the following:—That the mission of the church of Jesus Christ on earth, is the evangelization and christianization of the fallen sons of Adam in the world; and as such, has had imparted to it, from its Great Head, the antagonizing properties, as that of salt and light, calculated to meet and dispel the moral putrefaction and darkness of earth's benighted tenants, to which the moral and spiritual world has a natural and necessary tendency. To effect this; and to carry out the original designs of the institution and organization of Christian churches on earth, has ever been the great and ~~paramount~~ and paramount object of Christians in all ages of the christian church. Particularly, has this ever characterized the denomination now called Baptist, but in different ages and in different localities, frequently from reproach, or otherwise, bearing different appellations; such as Paulicians, from Paul, their great founder, Sabigenes, Cathari, Waldenses, Menchies, Baptist &c. &c., and until a very modern date, has there ever been a different spirit animating any branch of this numerous and ancient family—and we may be permitted to add, without offence we trust—the only true witnesses of Jesus, through the dark night of Pagan, Popish and Protestant persecutions, that have stood firm and unmovable; and often, from the the dark caverns of their retreat, have they merged forth, imparting a saving and an antagonizing power to earth's benighted sons: often as Peddlers, with baskets on their arms, filled with "notions," when and where the hand of persecution inhibited the word of God; they went forth, as heralds and missionaries of the cross of Christ; with the the word of God upon their tongues, and the grace of God in their souls and the love of Christ and of souls, animating them to proclaim salvation through faith alone, in the Redeemer's precious blood;—and not through the empty works and vain traditions of man's inherent righteousness. And never, until, in the early part of the present century, after Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice, who had been sent out to India, as missionaries, under the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, and both by examining the question of Baptism in the original text of the Scriptures, had become Baptists by being baptised at Calcutta by, either Dr. Casey or Marshman, then Baptist missionaries at that place, under the English Board of Baptist Missions, and by this act, being thrown out of support from the Presbyterian Board, and there having been up to that time no Amer-

Board for Baptist Missions, Dr. Rice returned to the United States for the purpose of stirring up the churches upon the great work of Foreign Missions—was there ever a voice raised in the midst of the great Baptist family against the Heaven-born cause of Missions, to propagate the Gospel of life to a lost world, in which glorious cause our Savior spent his life, and Paul and his co-adjutors toiled and labored and at last gave up their lives. Hence, with these facts before us, we can but believe that Missions are of God, and that the missionary spirit, which animated the bosom of Paul in visiting and planting christian churches in all the world, and which same spirit it has animated the great Baptist family from the day of Paul down to the present age; with the exception of a very small integral part of the Baptist family are the true heirs of the Gospel, and consequently binding upon every christian, and every church, and every Association of every age and country, and will continue so binding until earth's farthest verge has been reached and the last son and daughter of Adam's fallen children are converted unto God and sanctified by the spirit of the Gospel. Hence, we unfurl this as the great Banner, under which we as an Association purpose to fight the battles of the Lord against the mighty hosts of darkness—and for this object, we solicit the co-operation and aid of all christians, and especially those of the Baptist family. For, to diffuse Light and Knowledge and Truth and Salvation among the darkened and benighted of our land, is a great and leading subject of our organization and mission in this part of God's moral and spiritual vineyard.

SAM. C. CRAFT,
A. WILSON,

} Committee

E

The financial committee beg leave to report, that they have received as follows:

Amounts sent up by the Church as minute funds	.....	\$23.75
Am'ts contributed by individuals during the session for association fund	.....	0.00
Making cash in hand	.....	\$23.75
On subscription, to be paid hereafter, as follows:		
Cash	.....	\$38.00
4 bushels Potatoes	.....
5 Beef Steers	.....
2 pr. socks	
1 Grubbing Hoe	
All of which is respectfully submitted,		

J. J. LEWIS, Ch'n.

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CHURCHES AND STATISTICS:

CHURCHES.	PASTORS.	DELEGATES.	Sabbath Meetings.	Per Member.	No in Fellow.
Aminon,	Hillsboro,	S. L. Ooss, J. Hendry.	1	\$ 1.00	57
Bethel,	Poll,	A. Wilson, J. Futch.	1	1.55	84
The Hartstaff,	Manatee,	M. N. Clews.	1	1.00	18
The Harris,	Manatee,	W. C. Hayman.	1	1.50	31
Apple Branch,	Folk,	David Sloan,	1	5.00	81
Midway,	Hillsboro,	J. J. Lewis.	3	2.60	32
Creek,	Hillsboro,	S. Halt, I. Combie.	3	2.65	25
Salem,	Hillsboro,	S. B. Todd, W. Wilder.	1, 2, 3, 4	2.00	48
Stalloh,	Hillsboro,	M. Wisen, L. Gaskins.		4.00	
Spring Branch,	Hillsboro,	Sam. J. Craft.			
Kampa,	Hillsboro,	J. Casey.			
of Cassese,	Hillsboro,	Total		\$28.75	371

Note to the Churches.

The above table is made out from the returns sent up from the churches, and consequently, as will be seen, is very imperfect. I would suggest that churches hereafter embody in their reports, in addition to what is required in the 3d Art. of the Constitution, the following items: 1st: The name of the pastor; the times of their regular meetings; their Post office; the amount sent up for any particular object; and 2d: The names of all ministers in membership with them, together with their respective Post offices, so as to be able to get a full list of our ministry.

THE CLERK.

The brethren will observe, by comparing the appropriations made by the 13th item of our proceedings, with the report of the financial committee, that there is a deficiency of \$20.92 having paid for printing the minutes \$20.92 when only \$20.00 was set apart for the same of the Clerk.