

MINUTES
OF THE
TWENTY FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION
OF THE
CENTER ASSOCIATION
OF
FREEWILL BAPTISTS
HELD WITH
Woodland Freewill Baptist Church
AUGUST 2-5, 1917

W. M. COGGINS, Moderator
R. BESS, Assistant Moderator
M. L. HUNT, Clerk
W. M. SUMMERS, Assistant Clerk

TECUMSEH, OKLAHOMA:
NEW MORNING STAR PUBLISHING HOUSE.
1918.

PROCEEDINGS

The twenty-fourth annual session of Center Association of Free-will Baptist convened with Woodland church, Thursday evening August 2nd 1917. Introductory sermon was preached by Rev. W. M. Coggins. Text Acts 3:19.

The Moderator appointed Bros. W. B. Farris, Mike Phillips, and A. Willoughby as committee on divine service.

FRIDAY MORNING

Association opened with prayer by Rev. J. G. Stone. Eight churches reported with letters and delegates, to-wit:

Stratford:—Delegates: Eugene Clay and Chas. Leewright. Deacons: W. M. Summers, R. M. Roland and Mike Phillips.

Leager:—Delegates: A. W. Wood, W. E. Haskins and J. L. Jones. Deacon: W. G. Jarvis.

Rocky Point:—Delegates: J. G. Gordon and Sister M. E. Gordon.

Pecan Grove:—Delegate: W. L. Howard.

Oakman:—Delegates: R. L. Starr, Virgil Hunt, M. L. Hunt and Sister Ethel Carton. Deacon: H. A. Berryman. Minister: R. Bess.

Galey Chapel:—Delegate and Deacon: Bro. Tom Jamar and A. Willoughby.

Woodland:—Delegates: W. B. Farris and H. E. Haley. Minister: J. W. Smithey.

Happy Land:—Delegate: W. M. Davis.

Rosedale:—Delegate: Rev. A. W. Solomon.

The election of officers resulted in the choice of Rev. W. M. Coggins, Moderator; Rev. R. Bess, Assistant Moderator; M. L. Hunt, Clerk; W. M. Summers, Assistant Clerk.

Rev. W. E. Dearmore of Nebraska yearly meeting brought greetings, and was received as advisory council. Adjourned until 2.p. m. with prayer by Rev. J. W. Smithey.

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Preaching at 11. a. m. by Rev. W. E. Dearmore, followed by Rev. R. Bess. Text Hosea, 7:8.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Session opened with prayer by Bro. Williams and Bro. Tom Jamar. The Moderator appointed the following committees:

Bill of Arrangement—Bros. Chas. Leewright, Mike Phillips and H. C. Halley.

Temperance—Bros. W. G. Jarvis, H. A. Berryman and Sister M. E. Gordon.

Obituary—Bros. J. W. Smithey, W. B. Farris and J. G. Gordon.

Sunday Schools—Bros. J. G. Stone, W. G. Fields and Sister Carton.

Publication—Bros. W. L. Howard, R. Bess and M. L. Hunt.

Deacons Committee reported. Report received and Committee retained another year. The Committee is Alva Oliver, R. N. Roland, W. M. Summers, A. Willoughby, M. Odom, G. M. Karnes, and H. A. Berryman.

Adjourned until 9:30 Saturday. Prayer by Moderator.

Preaching at night by Rev. W. G. Fields followed by Rev. A. W. Solomon. Text, John 3:5.

SATURDAY MORNING

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Rev. W. G. Fields. Rules of order read by Moderator.

TEMPERANCE

Resolved, That we are in favor of prohibiting the manufacture, transporting, importing and sale of all intoxicants, and place ourselves on record in the most positive terms, that we will use our influence to accomplish this end and that we will withdraw our fellowship from ministers or lay members who sign a petition for the sale of any intoxicants or use as a beverage.

W. G. Jarvis, H. A. Berryman, M. E. Gordon, Committee.

REPORT OF TREASURER

Total collections \$19.00; disbursement, postage and paper .65; printing minutes \$16.50. Balance voted to Treasurer and donated by him \$1.85.

W. M. Summers, Treasurer.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

Committee on Sunday schools reported as follows:

Name of school	Kind	Classes	Attendance	Collections	Interest
Galey Chapel	Union	4	80	\$8.00	Good
Pecan Grove	Union	4	40	6.00	Good
Leager	Union	4	25	8.00	Good
Stratford	Freewill Bap	4	40	14.00	Good
Woodland	Union	4	35	10.00	Good
Oakman	Union	5	60	20.00	Good
Rocky Point	Union	4	40	12.00	Good
Happy Land	None				

Report received and committee discharged.

OBITUARIES

Committee on obituary reported as follows: Sister Blevins of Galey Chapel, departed this life in the triumph of a living faith. We mourn our loss, but our loss is her gain.

J. W. Smithey, J. G. Gordon, W. B. Farris, Committee.

Adjourned until 2:30 p. m. Prayer by Sister Gordon.

Preaching at 11 a. m. by Rev. J. W. Smithey followed by Rev. J. G. Stone. Text I - Cor. 13

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Mike Phillips. The following resolutions were adopted:

1. That 300 copies of the minutes be printed.
2. That the Fifth Sunday meetings be held at Oakman in September, 1917. Rocky Point in December, 1917. Stratford in March, 1918.
3. That we correspond with Dibble Association.
4. That we represent in the Co-operative General Association. Rev. W. G. Fields delegate Rev. R. Bess alternate.
5. That we endorse the College move at Tecumseh and agree to patronize it all we can.
9. That we recommend the reading of our church paper, the New Morning Star.

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7. That we recommend our ministers to preach at least once a year on the duties of the church to its pastors.

8. That the church covenant be read by pastor to church at least four times a year.

9. That we extend our thanks to our beloved Moderator, Bro. Coggins for his able and wise counsel.

10. That the next annual meeting be held with Oakman church, beginning Thursday night before the third Sunday in August, 1918, and that the retiring Moderator preach the introductory sermon.

11. That we extend our heart felt thanks to Woodland church and community for their kindness and hospitality during this meeting of the Association.

12. That we adjourn to meet at the time and place above mentioned.

Chas. Leewright, J. W. Phillips, H. C. Haley, Committee.

REV. W. M. COGGINS, Moderator.

M. L. HUNT, Clerk.

FORM OF LETTER OF DISMISSION

T _____ Texas _____ 191 _____

This certifies that _____ is a regular member of the _____ Freewill Baptist Church at _____ in good standing as such. We commend _____ to the fellowship of God's people; and when we are informed that _____ has united with some other evangelical church, we shall consider _____ regularly dismissed from this church.

In behalf of the Freewill Baptist church at _____

Clerk. _____ Pastor.

STATISTICAL TABLE

Churches	Pastors	Clerk	Meeting Day	Dismissed by Letter	Died	Confession of Faith	Recommendation	Total
Stratford Church	W. A. Hearron	Anna Leewright	3rd	3			1	60
Leager Church	J. N. Caton	Emma Bandy	4th					30
Rocky Point Church	J. G. Stone	J. B. Allen						
Oakman Church	J. N. Caton	M. L. Hunt	3rd			4	3	44
Woodland Church	W. C. Fields	Minnie Brittenburg	1st				2	24
Happy Land Church	Jos. Deaton	O. B. Davis	3rd					43
Galey Chapel Church	W. M. Coggins	M. E. Willoughby	1st	7	1			26
Pecan Grove Church	J. N. Caton							17
Rosedale								

RECEIVED

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FREEWILL BAPTIST ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. **THE BIBLE.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are our infallible rule of faith and practice.

2. **GOD.** There is one living and true God, revealed in nature as the Creator, Preserver, and Righteous Governor of the universe. and in the Scriptures as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, yet as one God, infinitely wise and good, whom all intelligent creatures are supremely to love, adore, and obey.

3. **CHRIST.** Christ is God manifest in the flesh; in His divine nature truly God, in His human nature truly man. The Mediator between God and man, once crucified, He is now risen and glorified and is our ever present Saviour and Lord.

4. **THE HOLY SPIRIT.** The Scriptures assign to the Holy Spirit all attributes of God. He is the reprover, comforter, guide and sanctifier of men.

5. **THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD.** God exercises a wise and benevolent providence over all beings and all things by maintaining the constitution and laws of nature. He also performs special acts of grace, not otherwise provided for, as the highest welfare of man requires.

6. **THE SINFULNESS OF MAN.** Man was created innocent but by disobedience fell into a state of sin and condemnation. His posterity therefore inherited a fallen nature of such tendencies that all who come to years of accountability sin, and become guilty before God.

7. **THE WORK OF CHRIST.** The Son of God by his incarnation, life, sufferings, death and resurrection effected for all a redemption from sin that is full and free and is the ground of Salvation by faith.

8. **THE TERMS OF SALVATION.** The conditions of salvation are 1. Repentance or sincere sorrow for sin and hearty renunciation of it. 2. Faith or the unreserved committal of one's self to Christ as Saviour and Lord with purpose to love and obey Him in all things. In the exercise of saving faith the soul is renewed by the Holy Spirit, freed from the dominion of sin and becomes a child of God. 3. Continuance in faith and obedience until death.

9. **ELECTION.** God determined from the beginning to save all who should comply with the conditions of salvation. Hence by faith in Christ men become His elect.

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10. **FREEDOM OF THE WILL.** The human will is free and self-controlled, having power to yield to the influence of the truth and the Spirit, or to resist them and perish.

11. **SALVATION FREE.** God desires the salvation of all, the God invites all, the Holy Spirit strives with all, and whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely.

12. **PERSEVERANCE.** All believers in Christ, who through grace persevere in holiness to the end of life, have promise of eternal salvation.

13. **GOSPEL ORDINANCES.** BAPTISM, or immersion of believers in water, and the LORD'S SUPPER, are ordinances to perpetuated under the Gospel; FEET WASHING, an ordinance teaching humility, of universal obligation, and to be administered to all true believers.

14. **THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.** The divine law requires that one day in seven be set apart from secular employments and amusements, for rest, worship, holy works, and activities, and for personal communion with God.

15. **RESURRECTION, JUDGMENT AND FINAL RETRIBUTION.** The Scriptures teach the resurrection of all men at the last day. They that have done good will come forth to the resurrection life, and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment; then the wicked will "go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life."

FORM OF LETTER FROM CHURCH TO ASSOCIATION

State of _____ County of _____

We, the Freewill Baptist Church at _____
to the First Oklahoma Association of Freewill Baptists, assembled
with _____ Church, send as delegates from our
Church _____

whom we pray you will receive to sit with you and aid you in your
Golly deliberations. Give full statistical report.

Done in Church Conference _____ 191 _____

Pastor.

Clerk.

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RULES OF ORDER

1. At every sitting the meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer by the Moderator, or whomsoever he may request.
2. Those who speak shall arise and address the Moderator. Personal reflections shall be avoided in all debates.
3. No motion shall be discussed without first being seconded.
4. When a motion has been made and seconded, the Moderator shall ask: "Any discussions or remarks?" If none the question shall be disposed of as usual.
5. If any proposition or motion under debate contains two or more points, it shall be divided at the request of any member and the vote taken separately.
6. Motions made and lost shall not be recorded on the minutes unless ordered by the party making the motion.
7. No one shall speak more than twice on the same subject without special leave of the Moderator.
8. All questions shall be decided by a majority of members present.
9. No member shall be absent while in session without leave of the Moderator, and if so his name shall be left off the minutes.
10. Minutes shall be leisurely read and corrected if requested by Association.
11. Arrangements shall be made at each meeting of the Association for two or more sermons or equivalent devotional exercises during each day.
12. The Rules of Order shall be distinctly read from the chair immediately after the organization of the body.
13. Alternations may be made in these rules at any regular session.

Printer's Note—Copy for this minute was received December 18, 1917, and minute was printed February 8, 1918.

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THE LAW OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The Lord's Supper was instituted for God's people. They all have equal rights to the supper, and that right is a birthright. For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body (1 Cor. 12:15). This is not water but spiritual baptism. Again Christ says: "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved," (1 John 10:9.) "He that entereth not by door into the Sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber," (John 10:4), Christ is not water baptism, yet he is the door. There is but one door, Christ says. He is that door, and he that cometh in at that door should have full fellowship and equal rights with all Christians. Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthy, eateth and drinketh damnation not to the church, but to himself. It is a personal matter in judging and eating.

The church that does judge and exclude any of God's people is not acting in keeping with the instructions given to the church at Corinth. To this judge and exclude one of the children of God, is to offend the child so judge and excluded. Now listen to Christ: "He that offends one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged to his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea" (Mat. 18:6; 1 Cor. 10:30, 31, 32.) It is contended that they of the same faith and order should be entitled to partake in the Lord's Supper. I admit that the true faith is the means by which men become Christians. If this is what is meant by the same faith I shall not object. As to order, if nothing but gospel order is meant, very well; but I do not think that one child of God should dictate, just what another should believe or what church he should belong to in order that he may be in the right church, for the church is but an organic body of Christians, and simply placing your name on the roll book of the best church on earth does not make you a Christian, neither will a like process in the worst church make a sinner.

Eunuch believed and was baptised. What church did he join? Here is faith and there is order. Now I ask if the Eunuch was to wish to commune with some of the churches, would he be allowed the right? No, he is not of the same faith and order, yet he is admitted to heaven.

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but nay, he could not be admitted to a sectarian table. At the Lord's table all his people have a perfect right, be he whom he may, and when the supper is set and all of God's people are not invited. It is not the Lord's but a sectarian supper, so we being many, are one body in Christ; and every member one of another (Rom. 12:5). And the way we become one body is by being baptized into that body and of course this is spiritual baptism. He that gets in by water baptism, the same is a thief and a robber, and when any one gets into that body in a legal way he has a legal right to all benefits and privileges of that body, for we are all partakers of that one bread (1 Cor. 10:17). By partaking we exhibit a oneness of that body. Who is meant by we? It certainly means all Christians of all ages; when you come together tarry one for another; be of one mind, but let the word of God control the mind. If it ever had been intended by the Savior that the supper should be guarded as some attempt to guard it, God would have endowed the judge with wisdom to discern the pure from the unpure. But the standpoint from which they judge is water baptism, and a legal administration this settles the matter and Christian character is left entirely out, by which some make a woeful mistake; for after all this precaution, some have been found unworthy of the least of privileges of any church. To admit that immersion is to be the only mode of baptism and a true believer receiving it, is this not all right? Some would answer, if by legal administration. This is all that is wanting. Is not this a purely personal matter? If so he has been as surely baptized as anyone. It is the duty of the preacher to baptize and the applicant baptised. When this is done each have performed a personal duty. If I had never been baptized and had to wait till I found one whom I knew to be a real administrator, I would never be baptized, as I can not know the heart of man. Two acting in concert, one acting in good faith and the other not. Every Christian is strictly responsible for his own acts, and not for another's. Simon, the sorcerer, believed and was baptized, and that by a legal administrator, and yet, it was discovered that he was not a Christian, so we see that baptism by a legal administrator, does not confer any claim upon him to any Christian rights, as this case proves it to be a personal matter; as we

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see the apostle did his duty and Simon did not, or vice versa. The apostle, inspired as he was, did not discern the evil of Simon's heart, neither can we know the heart of man. When we do our duty it is ours; when the applicant, it is his. So we find that faith, repentance, baptism and Christian duties are all personal and only accountable to God and not unto man. Various are the opinions of men; and if we use the capacity that God has given, I do not think that we should be eternally condemned for what we can not help. The church of Christ is divided into many members, but it is one spiritual body and Christ is the head, and they should have the same care, on for the other, as the natural body has for its members, yet they do not perform the same office yet they should observe the same interest of the body.

Should Christians all commune together at the Lord's table? I answer, that the Lord has joined together, let no man put asunder. We have something like forty-eight states in the Union. They are all equal, free and independent states, and yet they are one united and have one great central point at which to meet and testify that they are free and independent states, and yet they are one nation. All Christians should have one central point at which to meet and let the world know that they are one. Let that be the Lord's table. Christians feel alike if they do not think alike. They can preach together, sing together, pray together, and love together, and should they not commune together? And will they all meet at last in the same holy and happy land together? Then a union and free communion is forced upon us. Christ said at the last supper that He would drink no more of the fruit of the wine with us till He drank anew in His kingdom.

Then all Christians, of all ages will sit around one communion table in heaven. As we find ourselves assembled thus around one Lord's table in heaven, so should we be on earth.

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FREEWILL BAPTIST CHURCH COVENANT

Having given ourselves to God by faith in Christ, and adopted the Word of God as our rule of faith and practice, we now give ourselves to one another by the will of God in this solemn covenant. We promise by his grace to love and obey Him in all things, to avoid all appearance of evil, to abstain from all sinful amusements and unholy conformity to the world, from all sanction of the use and sale of intoxicating beverages, and "to provide things honest in the sight of all men."

We agree faithfully to discharge our obligations in reference to the study of the Scriptures, secret prayer, family devotion, and social worship; and by self-denial, faith, and good works endeavor to "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." We will not forget the assembling of ourselves together for church conferences, public worship, and the observance of the ordinances of the Gospel, nor fail to pay according to our ability for the support of the church, of its poor, and all its benevolent work. We agree to accept Christian admonition and reproof with meekness, and to watch over one another in love, endeavoring to "keep the unity of the Spirit" in the bond of peace, to be careful of one another's happiness and reputation, and seek to strengthen the weak, encourage the afflicted, admonish the erring, and as far as able promote the success of the church and of the Gospel. We will everywhere hold Christian principle sacred and Christian obligations and enterprises supreme; counting it our chief business in life to extend the influence of Christ in society; constantly praying and toiling that the Kingdom of God may come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

To this end we agree to labor for the promotion of educational and denominational enterprises, the support of missions, the success of Sabbath Schools, and evangelistic efforts for the salvation of souls and the conversion of the world. And may the God of peace sanctify us wholly, and preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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CONSTITUTION

From long experience we, the members of the Center Association, being regularly baptized upon a profession of our faith in Christ, and convinced of the necessity of a combination of churches to perpetuate a union and communion among us, and to preserve and maintain a correspondence with each other, do therefore ordain this constitution for our government as an Association.

Art. 1. Membership.— This Association is composed of ordained ministers and deacons with delegates chosen by the different churches in our union not exceeding three delegates from each church, who, upon presenting letters, shall be entitled to seats.

Art. 2. Letters from each church represented will express their number in fellowship and number of ordained and licentiate ministers, their postoffice addresses, the number of members received upon confession of faith, by letter or recommendation, by restoration or denominational choice, the number dismissed by letter, excluded or died since last Association.

Art. 3. The members thus chosen shall be known as the Hopewell Association of Freewill Baptists, composed of sundry churches in Oklahoma. This Association shall have no power to lord over God's heritage, or have any ecclesiastical power over the churches, but reserving the right to withdraw from any church becoming disorderly.

Art. 4. Officers.—The Association must have a Moderator, clerk, and treasurer, who are to be chosen by the members present.

Art. 5. New Churches.—Newly organized churches may be admitted into this Association when petitioned by letter or delegates, and if upon examination found to be orthodox and orderly, they may be received into the Association and given the hand of fellowship.

Art. 6. Questions.—No question from any church shall come under the consideration of the Association unless it has first been discussed in its own church.

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Art. 7. Motions.—Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the Association except it be withdrawn by the person making it.

Art. 8. Minutes.—The Association is to endeavor to furnish the churches minutes of the Association in proportion to the member in each church at the discretion of the churches.

Art. 9. Signature.—The minutes of the Association shall be read and corrected if needed, and signed by the Moderator and clerk, before the close of the Association.

Art. 10. Each ordained minister should maintain membership in some local church, and if he should have a letter and should hold same for a period of twelve months when convenience and opportunities are afforded, then his name shall not appear in the "Roll of Ordained Ministers," in this Association.

Art. 11. Amendments to the constitution may be made when necessary by a two-third vote of the members present.

AMENDMENT NO. 1.

Each ordained minister shall be a member of a church in the bounds of the association and if he should hold his letter for a period of three months when opportunities afford him he shall surrender his credentials to the quarterly or yearly meeting.

