

H. RAY BERRY

Minutes

OF THE

TEXAS FREEWILL BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION



HELD WITH

Harper's Union Church

Rusk County

Eight Miles South of Henderson

*September 29 to October 1,
Inclusive, 1932*

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The Fifty-fifth Annual Session of The Texas Free Will Baptist Association was held with Harper Union Church, commencing on Thursday night, September the 29th, and continuing through Sunday. The introductory sermon was preached by Rev. Ira Harper. The first business session was called Friday morning at 9:30 by the Moderator, Rev. E. S. Jamason. Devotional Service was held by Brother R. V. Waldon.

The first item of business was the reading of Church letters, there were thirteen represented by letter and delegates.

The various committees were appointed from the chair:

Credential Committee—Miss Minnie Jimmerson, Rev. J. L. Bounds and W. B. Duke, Jr.

Pulpit Committee—H. W. Watson, G. L. Young and A. R. Harper.

Adjourned for preaching to meet at 1:30.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Rev. J. L. Bounds preached to us at eleven o'clock.

Devotional service led by Rev. T. W. Smith.

Verbal report from chairman of camp ground committee, who stated that the ground had not been secured. Report of Credential Committee adopted. It was recommended that we receive the letters and seat the delegates from the following churches:

Dirgin: Beatrice Fitzgerald, Tharada Matthews, Murray Adams, Ruby St. Claire, Elizabeth Fitzgerald.

Campbell Hill: Curtis Perkins, Mrs. Curtis Perkins, Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Watson, John Cotton, H. W. Watson.

Venice: J. B. Fry and wife, S. E. Lunsford, L. A. Boatman.

New Hope: D. D. Stokes, Mack Young, Mrs. Era Grant, Mrs. Beulah Bryant, Donald Dunn.

Good Hope: Mrs. Tim Phillips, Mrs. Horace Phillips, Lois Anderson.

Chalk Hill: A. J. Williams, Lee Wilson, Willis Brown and wife.

Stewart Chapel: W. N. Graham and wife, R. M. Thornton and wife.

Mt. Olive: Misses Wilma Hunt, Tennie Lee Fears, J. R. Berry and G. O. Parker.

Darco: Chester Ross and wife, R. V. Waldon, Elizabeth Reeves, Johnny Pearl Hull.

Friendship: Barry Duke, Jessie Rose, Wendell Rayburn.

Harpers Union: A. R. Harper, Amos Morris, Cleo Hamett.

Broome: S. J. Hollis, Jack Adams, Blanche Waits, Thomas Miller, Monnie Lou Waits, Emma Gene Clark.

Sunday School Committee: Miss Minnie Jimmerson, Miss Asa Hillin and Ira Harper.

Evangelism: J. L. Bounds, Hubert R. Berry, H. W. Watson, S. J. Hollis and D. R. Jimmerson.

Young People: Mrs. Beulah Bryant, Misses Asa Hillin, Hazel Ross, and Joe Rex Berry.

Finance: J. L. Ross, T. W. Smith, Joe R. Berry.

Missions: Misses Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Wilma Hunt, Tennie Lee Fears, Mrs. B. A. Grant, Mrs. W. M. Graham.

State Convention: A. R. Harper, G. O. Parker, W. N. Graham, Jack Adams, J. L. Bounds.

Relation of State Work to National Convention: Ira Harper, Miss Minnie Jimmerson, M. E. Adams, G. L. Young, J. C. Hamett.

Resolutions Committee: Will H. Hays, W. A. Thornton, M. C. Young, T. E. Miller.

Obituary Committee: Mrs. R. M. Thornton, W. B. Duke, Jr., Ruby St. Claire.

This Association voted to sever no relations and make no new ones at this time. Miss Minnie Jimmerson gave us an address on the system of Church work which was very interesting and instructive. Adjourned to meet at 9:30 Saturday morning.

At night the young people gave us a program pertaining to the work of young people, after which A. L. Ross of Carthage, Texas, delivered a very able discourse on the work of the Sunday School.

SATURDAY SESSION

The Association convened at 9:30 Saturday morning.

The devotional service was conducted by Mrs. B. A. Grant.

Reading minutes of previous days session. Adopted as read.

A vote of thanks was tendered A. L. Ross for the interesting address he delivered on the subject of Sunday School on Friday night.

A letter of sympathy was extended to Rev. Inah Gates Stout of Anoka, Minn., upon the death of her father.

Report of Sunday School received, as follows: We are glad to report that most of the churches maintain quite active schools. We would recommend that the program of the years work be planned more specifically around the Church calendar and that the outstanding days, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, etc., be given a more prominent place in the church school. We find that much is accomplished through the social activities of the church school and would like to recommend that more of the social life of the community be sponsored by the church school. The school should consider its task fourfold. Jesus grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him. May our goal be for fully developed Christians. We recommend that the Sunday School be given an hour on the Associational program and that each Sunday School be asked to send delegates for that period. The committee was retained.

MISS MINNIE JIMMERSON, Chairman.

Treasurer's report adopted.

Report on missions was amended and adopted as follows: Our mission work is not progressing as we had hoped to find it in this association. One church has reported to the Committee that they have reorganized their ladies missionary society and are doing splendid work. We recommend that each church organize a missionary society, and see that the work is carried out in full and report at the next association.

We also recommend that mission work have a place on the program and that the women send delegates.

MRS. B. A. GRANT, Chairman.

The society was given the hour of 1:30 on Saturday of each Association. Report of Committee on state work read as follows: We would recommend that a state worker be employed for the year 1932-33 and that our Association pledge our cooperation and financial support for such a worker to

the extent of \$500.00. Amount to be apportioned by the committee to the individual church.

IRA HARPER, Chairman.

Report of Committee on Finance: We appreciate the efforts of the churches in the acreage plan and recommend that this plan be continued with more zeal.

The churches which incorporated this in their plan of finance now find the prospects for a good year much better than on previous occasions.

We recommend that this Association contribute \$40.00 to the State Convention for miscellaneous expenses.

In the event that a State worker is placed upon the field we would suggest the following apportionment to the churches:

Good Hope	\$75.00
New Hope	50.00
Friend Ship	25.00
Union Arbor	50.00
Broome	15.00
Youngblood	50.00
Dirgin	25.00
Stewart Chapel	25.00
Campbell	20.00
Mt. Olive	20.00
Harper	20.00
Venice	15.00
Garrison	15.00
Chalk Hill	20.00
Darco	20.00
Center Point	25.00
Buncom	30.00

Total \$500.00

J. L. ROSS, Chairman.

The above measure was tabled in the forenoon.

Adjourned to 1:30.

Hubert R. Berry preached at eleven o'clock from Luke 15:8.

Afternoon session called at 1:30 with Hubert R. Berry in the chair..

Report on Young Peoples work: We are grateful for the recognition shown our efforts in the Association and recommend that each organization be allowed the privilege of sending delegates to the Association each year. We also recommend that the young people plan for two Associational rallies a year; one during the Easter season in the Spring and the other in the Fall at Hallowe'en time. The first rally to be held this year with be the New Hope church Friday night, October 28, 1932.

MRS. BEULAH BRYANT, Chairman.

The resolution that was tabled in the forenoon was reconsidered and finally passed.

This Association recommends to the convention to sever no relations and make no new ones. Delegates so instructed.

Report on Evangelism: All the churches in our denomination should be vitally interested in evangelistic work, and the association should feel grateful to the all-wise Creator for the opportunity to do a great work in the field of evangelistic service. We believe that personal evangelism is one of the outstanding needs of the present day. We recommend that all members be impressed with the importance of personal evangelism. We further recommend that our association offer some definite plan to our local churches to further the evangelistic spirit.

It is also our desire to impress upon the membership of all the churches the need of a better and more prosperous financial support of the evangelistic work in our denomination.

We also recommend that the young people be given a part in the evangelistic work, for there is a great work to be done among them, and they may also do a great work among the parents.

We recommend too, that this association encourage full and winter revivals.

J. L. BOUNDS, Chairman.

REPORT OF NEW HOPE FREE WILL BAPTIST LEAGUE

Condition of League good.

Number of members	30
Average attendance	20
Average attendance of teachers	3

We have our socials quarterly. New or old business is called for each Sunday night. Our officers are elected every six months.

Amount of money raised for church purposes above our literature \$9.50.

We had a report of the Mt. Olive Christian Endeavor, which was organized over two years ago, has been carrying on steadily ever since, with a work that has been interesting and constructive to both old and young.

There is a Methodist and Baptist church both in our community, and as the churches are on friendly terms with each other and members of each belong to the Christian Endeavor we meet at one church one Sunday night and at the other the next. We have about 40 active members and are very proud of our society. The work stimulates interest in church activities, is a social center for the young people and is very beneficial.

There were twenty-three converts in the Baptist church during the summer revival, all of whom were either adult or junior members of the Christian Endeavor.

Report handed in by Miss Asa Hillin.

The committee on obituaries reported nine deaths that have occurred in our association since our last meeting. They are as follows:

C. L. Haden,	Harper
Mrs. Alice Sparkman	Harper
J. F. Patterson	Youngblood
J. J. Johnson	Union Arbor
Mrs. Amos Morris	Good Hope
Mrs. Martha Minor	Center Point

Mrs. W. P. Downing _____ Center Point
Mrs. Aubrey Clark _____ Mt. Olive
Mrs. Higginbotham _____ Campbell Hill

We regret very much the death of these our beloved brothers and sisters, and extend our sympathy to the bereaved ones, and commend them to the grace of God which is able to build them up.

MRS. R. M. THORNTON, Chairman.

The Sunday School committee was authorized to locate the Sunday School Convention and name the date.

The next session will be held with Friendship Church, Panola county, two miles north of Clayton. Brother Ira Harper will preach the introductory sermon on Thursday night before the 1st Sunday in October, 1933.

Report on resolutions adopted as follows: Though human words do not express the gratitude of our hearts, it is our only means of offering our appreciation to the church and community for their hospitality while in their midst, to the ones who have so earnestly held up His name from the pulpit, in your committee reports, to the ones that have given us such splendid musical programs, and to all that have helped in any way to make this association the success it has been, not only from the standpoint of a pleasant and enjoyable meeting, but in this we have laid out a year's program, which we so much hope our church will carry on.

Therefore be it resolved that this body expresses its gratitude by a rising vote of thanks.

T. E. MILLER, Chairman
M. E. YOUNG.

This closed another harmonious session of the association.

E. S. JAMASON, Moderator.
T. D. ROSS, Clerk

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Of God.—Article 1. There is one God and Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in good time.

Of Free Will.—Article 2. We believe that the human will is free, and that all who have heard and who have learned of the Father have the ability to accept or reject the conditions of salvation.

Of Baptism.—Article 3. Mode—And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.—Matt. 3.

And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized of John in Jordan.—Mark 1:9.

Buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with Him through faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead.—Col. 2:12.

We are buried with Him in baptism, into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.—Romans 6:4-5.

For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.—Col. 3:3.

Subjects.—Go ye therefore and teach all nations—Matt. 28:19.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized—Acts 2:41.

And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in the house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into His house, he set meat before them and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house.—Acts 16:32-34.

If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest.—Acts 8:37-39.

Object.—The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us (not putting away the filth of the flesh, but the an-

swer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.—1 Peter 3:21.

The Lord's Supper.—Article 4. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.—1 Cor 11:28.

This done in remembrance of me.—Luke 22:19.

The Bible.—Article 5. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.—2 Tim. 3:16.

CONSTITUTION

Constitution amended at regular session of the Association.

Article 1. This Association shall be known as the Texas Free Will Baptist Association.

Article 2. It is not the object of this Association to usurp authority over the churches, but to recommend such measures as would promote unity of action among the churches, to harmonize the efforts of the individual churches with one another in their efforts to accomplish good and make each other more proficient in their good undertakings for good. ,

Article 3. This Association shall be composed of delegates from the churches, who shall be selected and sent from the churches composing it, and each church shall be entitled to two delegates, and for over fifty and not more than seventy-five members, a church shall be entitled to one more delegate.

Article 4. Ordained ministers may have seats in the Association and be entitled to privileges of delegates, even when not representing Churches. (As amended).

Article 5. New Churches and ministers may be admitted to membership on application when duly accredited. (As amended).

Article 6. The standing officers of this Association shall be Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary.

Article 7. This Association shall hold its sessions once

every year, at a time and place specified by a preceding session.

Article 8. The Association shall have the right to dismiss disorderly Churches and objectionable members at any of its sessions.

Article 9. This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, at any regular meeting of the Association.

CHURCH DECORUM

1st. The Church may choose a pastor annually, at the last regular conference in Associational year, or if they prefer, may choose a pastor for an indefinite length of time, to continue from year to year so long as he may deem it proper to keep up the connection.

2nd. When it becomes necessary a pastor may be chosen at any time, but if the choice be made at a special conference, the time must be appointed at a monthly meeting of the Church.

3rd. The pastor shall be moderator of the church, but when he is absent, or does not sit as moderator, being present, some suitable brother shall be appointed to sit in his place.

4th. There shall be two or more deacons in the Church, whose duty it shall be to superintend the collection and disbursement of all contributions made by the Church for the pastor, etc., and to distribute the bread and wine in administration of the Lord's Supper.

5th. Some suitable member shall be appointed clerk, and it shall be his duty to do the recording and other writing pertaining to the business of the Church, and to preserve a file of the minutes of the Association.

6th. When a new clerk is appointed, all the books, minutes, etc., belonging to the clerk, shall be immediately delivered to him by his predecessor.

7th. When the Church deems it necessary, a committee of not less than three male members, well acquainted with business, shall be appointed, whose business it shall be to give advice to brethren who apply to them, relative to cases of dealing, etc., with the Church.

8th. The Church shall hold a two days' meeting monthly embracing Saturday and the Lord's Day following, the first of which shall be the regular time of conference.

9th. It shall be the duty of every member, male and female, to attend each conference meeting if they can, for on that day the pastor is expected to instruct the Church in a special manner by giving plain and pointed lessons on doctrine, discipline and rules of holy living.

10th. Conferences shall be conducted as follows: 1. Prayer, unless Divine services have just been conducted, and generally then. 2. Invite visiting brethren to set. 3. Open a door for the reception of members. 4. Call for absentees. 5. For acknowledgements. 6. For reference of deferred business. 7. For miscellaneous business.

11th. Visiting brethren, as also helps called in from sister Churches, shall be allowed to speak and make motions or seconds, but not allowed to vote.

12th. An orderly member of the Baptist Church, which does not hold this Church in fellowship, may be received into the Church without a letter, when it is apparent that his Christian character is unimpeachable and that he has applied for a letter and could not obtain it, because he desired to join this or some sister Church. All other persons must join by letter or baptism.

13th. No member shall be received without the unanimous consent of members present; but unreasonable objections shall not be valid, and unless withdrawn, the member who makes them shall be liable to be taken under dealings by the Church.

14th. When the moderator calls for absentees the clerk shall inform the Church what male members have been absent for three successive conferences, and the moderator shall appoint some brother or brethren to cite each of them to the next conference.

15th. No member shall be expelled unless he has been cited verbally or in writing to attend his trial; provided his residence is known in the Church.

16th. When a witness not a member of this Church is introduced he shall not be examined until the question has been put to the Church: "Will you hear the testimony of this witness?"

17th. The evidence in every case of dealing and acknowledgements shall be minuted on the Church books.

18th. Members dismissed from the Church by letter, who become disorderly, or continue to hold their letters without a good reason, shall be cited to conference to answer for their conduct.

19th. Expelled members may be restored to fellowship on their petition, if their walk since expulsion has convinced the Church that they have sincerely repented of former evil conduct.

20th. A vote shall not be taken upon any question without a motion and second, and in all important questions the vote shall be taken by rising to the feet.

21st. No motion shall be made while a motion and second is before the conference.

22nd. It shall be considered disorderly for any member to absent himself from a conference when an important question is to be decided; but a member upon his request may be exempted by the Church from the voting on either side in peculiar cases.

23rd. No member shall leave the house during conference without sufficient cause, nor engage in conversation or whispering without subject being called to order by the moderator.

24th. All discussion in conference must be conducted with calmness and good feeling. Those who speak must arise to their feet and address the moderator and keep up to the point in debate.

25th. No one shall speak more than three times on the same motion, without permission from the moderator, nor shall the remarks of any one be unreasonably long.

26th. When the moderator speaks in debate he nominates some brother as moderator in his stead.

27th. No one shall be interrupted while speaking unless it be necessary to call him to order.

28th. It shall be the rule of the Church to attend to the administration of the Lord's Supper at least four times a year and the expenses are to be paid by the Church.

29th. If conscience of any are tender on the subject of feetwashing in any Church, they shall not be molested if they see fit to practice it.

30th. The decorum may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any two successive monthly conferences.

GOVERNMENT AND ORDINANCES

1. We believe that a Gospel Church, or a Church of Christ, is a congregation of Christians, constituted and governed according to the rules laid down in the New Testament.

2. That the rules require Churches to preserve the form of government and the ordinances of the first Christian Churches and to be composed of baptized believers of Christ.

3. That the establishment of a central or Catholic government over the visible Church, or any part thereof, is a device of earthly ambition repugnant to the word of God, subversive of the Churches and dangerous to the liberties of men.

4. That Gospel churches are the only ecclesiastical bodies or tribunals authorized by the Scriptures; that each church has the unrestricted right to administer its own government, without suspension or interference, being under Christ, essentially independent and absolute, and that if this right be surrendered to superintending jurisdiction, by delegation or otherwise the assembly then ceases to be a Gospel Church.

5. That the authority of Churches is designed for the perpetuation of true religion to the Gospel, and for the preserva-

tion of a pure and orderly body of Christians on earth; that it is fully sufficient for the purposes intended, but that it does not extend to the persons, property or consciences of men in any case whatever.

6. That the requisites to Church membership are faith in Christ and obedience to the Gospel; that faith in Christ necessarily exists in connection with the belief in the fundamental truths of Christianity and that to prescribe any other requisite of Church members is an assumption of authority on the part of the Church, and a departure from the plan of Gospel.

7. That the officers of a Church are Elders and Deacons; that Elders are also called Bishops or Pastors; that all are equal in rank, though they may perform different functions, since some may be Bishops or pastors of particular Churches, while others may be simply elders, having no pastoral charge.

8. That the authority of the minister of the Gospel extends to teaching, exhortation and rebuke, but no further; that he cannot perform any act which belongs to the authority of the Church, such as reception of members into the Church compact, or the expulsion of offenders; that as a member of the Church, he is no more than any other member, and if he is guilty of transgression, he is to be brought before the brethren and convicted or acquitted in the same manner as if he were a private person; yet we think it prudent and proper to call in advisory helps, especially if the minister is to be tried upon charges of heresy.

9. That Elders and Deacons may be set apart to their office by ordination, the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery and prayer.

