

MINUTES
OF THE
THIRD ANNUAL SESSION
OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE
OF THE
ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST OF THE
UNITED STATES

Damascus, Georgia

MAY 23-25, 1923

OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

REV. JOHN L. WELCH, President	Nashville, Tenn.
REV. J. E. HUDGENS, Vice-President	Ashland City, Tenn.
REV. E. C. MORRIS, Recording Secretary	Zebulon, N. C.
BRO. JAS. CHESHIRE, Treasurer	Colquitt, Ga.
REV. NEAL H. PARRISH, Field Secretary	Hahira, Ga.

AYDEN, N. C.
FREE WILL BAPTIST PRINTING CO.
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PROCEEDINGS.

The Third Session of the General Conference of the Original Free Will Baptist church of the United States met with the Damascus Free Will Baptist church, Damascus, Ga., May 23, 1923, at 11 o'clock A. M. The Moderator, Rev. Jno. L. Welch, called the Conference to order and the opening sermon was delivered by Rev. T. B. Mellette, of Turbeville, S. C. After the sermon, the meeting was called off until the afternoon.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

The Conference reassembled at 2:00 o'clock and after song and prayer the welcome addresses were delivered by Bros. Willie Wiley and Jas. Cheshire. The response was by Rev. J. E. Hudgens, of Ashland City, Tenn.

Bro. G. W. Fambrough, of Tennessee, was elected assistant Secretary and the following delegates were enrolled during the session:

From North Carolina, Revs. J. W. Alford, Kenly; B. P. Parks, Goldsboro; E. C. Morris, Zebulon; W. B. Everett, Ayden; J. C. Moye, Snow Hill; Hon. M. B. Prescott, Ayden; Sister Alice E. Lupton, New Bern.

From South Carolina, Rev. T. B. Mellette, Turbeville.

From Tennessee, Revs. Jno. L. Welch, Nashville; J. E. Hudgens, Ashland City; Bros. G. W. Fambrough, Nashville, E. D. Parker, Nashville.

From Georgia, Revs. Neal H. Parrish, Hahira; W. A. Pope, Camilla; J. T. Lee, Bros. Jas. Cheshire, Colquitt; T. G. Harvy, Jakin. There were several visiting ministers and laymen of Georgia, they were made welcome and granted the privilege of counseling with us.

From Florida, Rev. G. L. Shutes and Bro. D. H. Melvin, of Kynesville.

From Alabama, Rev. G. W. Cherry and Bro. J. C. Howell of Dothan. A letter from the Ohio River Yearly Meeting was read and the Credential Committee recommend that it become a part of the record.

Report of Ohio River Yearly Meeting.

To the Free Will Baptist Conference when assembled at Damascus, Ga.

1. The past year has been a very favorable one for the Free Will Baptist of the Ohio River Yearly Meeting. Many revivals have been held, and there is a spirit of work among our ministers and most of the laity.

2. We have 21 churches and about 1800 members. Number of ministers about 20.

3. Our delegate, Elder Charles Moore, cannot be present so we beg the privilege of representing by letter.

4. In these days of apostasy in many Protestant churches, we believe that there should be no entangling alliances with other churches, but that we, as a denomination, should stand by the faith of our fathers who have left us so rich a heritage in faith and works.

5. Our annual session meets in August. As the minutes of the General Conference were not received until January, we knew nothing of the request for ten dollars from each conference for an expense fund. After our next session we will remit to the treasurer the amount asked.

6. Praying for a successful Conference that shall be blessed of Almighty God to His honor and glory, we beg to remain your fellow workers in the Gospel of Christ.

ELD. SILAS MOORE, Moderator.

M. B. HUTCHINSON, Clerk.

There was a general discussion of what should be done to promote the cause. Rev. J. W. Alford spoke in the interest of the college, paper and Orphanage of North Carolina. Sister Lupton stated she was acting as Agent for the Baptist paper and that she would solicit subscriptions while attending the Conference. Rev. T. B. Mellette spoke in behalf of the work in South Carolina. Rev. G. L. Shutes and D. H. Melvin spoke for Florida, and Rev. J. E. Hudgens for Tennessee.

Adjourned until Thursday morning 9:00 o'clock.

THURSDAY MORNING.

Conference opened at 9:00 o'clock by praise and prayer. The minutes read and approved. Roll of delegates called and they answered to their names. The credential committee made report on the newly arrived delegates, and report accepted and delegates seated.

The following committees were appointed:

Missions.—Revs. B. P. Parks, T. B. Mellette and W. A. Pope.

Education.—Revs. J. W. Alford, Neal H. Parrish and layman E. D. Parker.

Auxiliary.—Sister Alice E. Lupton, laymen D. H. Melvin and Jas. Cheshire.

Sunday School.—Revs. E. C. Morris, G. L. Shutes and layman G. W. Fambrough.

Publication.—Revs. J. E. Hudgens, Jno. L. Welch and J. T. Lee.

The Recording Secretary was requested to secure a list of all ordained ministers belonging to the Associations and Conferences which compose this Conference, distribute among the ministers and that he draw on the treasurer for expenses.

Rev. G. W. Cherry of Dothan, Ala., made some very encouraging remarks regarding the State Line Association to which he belonged.

At the eleven o'clock hour, Rev. J. W. Alford of Kenly, N. C., delivered a very enthusiastic message on the question, "Shall we Retain our Independency as a Denomination."

Conference called off until 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

Conference was called to order at appointed time and after devotion, the Moderator, presented Mrs. Alice E. Lupton, of New Bern, N. C., as speaker for the afternoon. She addressed the audience on the importance of the Ladies' and Young People's work in the church.

The committee on Manual made the following report:

We have examined the manuscript copy and in our judgment it is a meritorious effort, but we also think there are some things that should be abridged or omitted, we therefore recommend that a committee be appointed to rewrite said Manual manuscript and present same to the next annual session of our Conference.

J. E. HUDGENS,

NEAL H. PARRISH,

Committee.

The above report was adopted.

The Committee on Manual Revision as follows: Revs. J. C.

Griffin, of North Carolina, Neal H. Parrish, of Georgia, and J. E. Hudgins, of Tennessee.

Report of Educational Committee.

The Committee on Education beg to recommend:

1. That since in North Carolina they are erecting college buildings which are to be for the good of all Free Will Baptist, we help in every way in this great and laudable work.

2. That we ask every conference and association of this General Conference to raise the educational standard for ministers, and we further request that no applicant for ordination be ordained who does not have at least a high school education.

3. We urge all our young men aspiring to the ministry to go to college if possible.

J. W. ALFORD,
NEAL H. PARRISH,
E. D. PARKER,

Committee.

The report was adopted.

FRIDAY MORNING.

At 8 o'clock the Conference reassembled and after praise and prayer, the Moderator declared the Conference ready for business.

The credential committee made report of new delegates arriving and the report received and delegates seated.

The Mission Committee reports as follows:

In regard to Home Mission, we ask that each delegate and minister present at this General Conference, endeavor to encourage the need and importance of the home mission spirit among our various conferences and associations. That each local organization establish mission points and if possible, establish local evangelist workers for the purpose of strengthening weak churches and establishing new ones in the bounds of their local jurisdiction.

We further ask that local home mission boards be established and plans devised in each local conference in the realms of our bounds for the raising of funds to maintain and suffice the calls that may be made to any respective organized board.

Further, we recommend that no minister be appointed by the

various conferences except those who are worthy, noted and well grounded in the faith and practice of the Original Free Will Baptist church.

Our recommendations for foreign missions are as follows:

That whereas we believe in the general spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we urge upon our conferences and associations the duty of taking a free will offering at least once per conference or association year, for foreign missions, and that said amount be deposited with their respective conference or association treasurer and held as such until an opportune time approaches, then at such time, said money may be turned into a national foreign mission treasurer and used at the discretion of the (National) General Conference.

B. P. PARKS,
W. A. POPE,
T. B. MELLETTE,
Committee.

The above report was adopted.

Sunday School Report.

Realizing that the Sunday School movement is a great factor and a vital necessity in building up the denomination throughout our connection,

Be it Resolved, 1. That we endeavor to systematize the work in each state so the entire work will be harmonized.

2. That there be some one appointed by this body, whose duty it shall be to gather all the information possible relative to the Sunday School work, and so report to this conference from time to time.

3. That we urge our people to use our own literature as far as practicable.

E. C. MORRIS,
G. W. FAMBROUGH,
G. L. SHUTES,
Committee.

The above report was adopted.

Rev. T. B. Mellette, Turbeville, S. C., was appointed to gather the information relative to Sunday School work in response to the Sunday School report.

Report of Committee on Young People's Work.

Realizing that our Young People's Work has reached a place where more extensive preparation must be made for the progress of the cause, we therefore recommend the following resolution for adoption:

1. That this Conference appoint superintendents or chairmen of Young People's Work in the states where there are none, to look after the work in their respective states.

2. That these superintendents or chairmen constitute a National Board of Y. P. W. whose duty shall be to take the work in charge with full authority to elect an Editor and associates as may be needed, for literature and arrange plans for the F. W. B. L. in general.

3. That all money paid into the National Treasury from the F. W. B. L. shall be used only for the promotion of the work.

ALICE E. LUPTON,
D. H. MELVIN,
JAMES CHESHIRE,
Committee.

The report was adopted.

The following were appointed as chairmen of Young People's Work in the various states:

Mrs. Alice E. Lupton, New Bern, N. C.; M. B. Hutchinson, Zaleski, O.; Miss Ruth Stewart, Nashville, Tenn.; Rev. J. W. Moore, Trio, S. C.; Miss Dott Harvey, Jakin, Ga.; J. C. Howell, Dothan, Ala.; and D. H. Melvin, Kynessville, Fla.

Report of Publication Committee.

Realizing that the mind of people feed largely on the literature they use, and the company they choose, we therefore recommend.

1. That we make a special effort to interest our people in the various publications of our church and endeavor to place within their hands, each of our church papers.

2. That we urgently recommend that the Sunday School literature published at Ayden, N. C., be used in all of our churches.

3. That we begin at once to plan for a Church History,

Systematic Theology and such other books, pamphlets and tracts as shall be deemed essential to the interest of the church.

J. E. HUDGENS,
J. L. WELCH,
J. T. LEE,
Committee.

The report was adopted.

Rev. J. W. Alford, Kenly, N. C., was appointed as a committee to investigate the copyright on Dunn-Butler Theology.

At eleven o'clock, Hon. M. B. Prescott, of Ayden, N. C., Revs. J. C. Moye, of Snow Hill, N. C., and W. B. Everett, Financial Agent of the Free Will Baptist College, delivered short, but timely, addresses on the great importance of supporting the College Campaign and rushing the work of construction on to completion.

The Conference was called off until 2 o'clock P. M.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

Conference assembled per adjournment, and after praise and prayer the Moderator called for reports and resolutions.

The treasurer reports as follows:

Nothing on hand from last Conference.

Received at this session:

Cumberland Association of Tennessee	\$10.00
Eastern Conference of North Carolina	10.00
Central Conference of North Carolina	10.00
Cape Fear Conference of North Carolina	10.00
State Convention of North Carolina	10.00
Midway Association of Georgia	10.00

Total	\$60.00
Paid Recording Secretary	10.00

Balance on hand \$50.00

Respectfully submitted,
JAS. CHESHIRE, Treas.

Election of Officers.

Officers for the ensuing year were elected as follows:

Rev. Jno. L. Welch, Nashville, Tennessee, Moderator; Rev.

J. E. Hudgens, Ashland City, Tenn., Assistant Moderator; Rev. E. C. Morris, Zebulon, N. C., Recording Secretary; Jas. Cheshire, Colquitt, Ga., Treasurer; Rev. Neal H. Parrish, Hahira, Ga., Field Secretary; Rev. G. L. Shutes, Kynesville, Fla., and Rev. T. B. Mellette, Turbeville, S. C., were elected to serve on the Executive Committee.

Resolutions were offered as follows:

Realizing that the women of our denomination can render valuable service through what is known as Ladies' Aid Societies and Home Mission Societies, we are recommending that the ministers of this Conference make an effort to get the ladies of their various churches to organize one or more of these societies and that they blend their efforts to promote our denominational institutions along with other lines of service. Offered by Mrs. Alice E. Lupton.

The above recommendation was adopted.

Resolution Offered by Rev. Neal H. Parrish.

Inasmuch as from time to time, conditions arise that disrupts organizations, destroying the peace and harmony of God's people, let us as a Conference, go on record as declaring not truly Free Will Baptist, associations, conferences or churches, that receive into their fellowship, churches or members excluded by sister associations, conferences or churches.

The above resolution was adopted.

Resolution warning against alliances and coalition movements, by Rev. T. B. Mellette.

Be it resolved by this General Conference of Original Free Will Baptist of the United States, that whereas we have learned through authoritative sources of a movement to ally, or coalite the Free Will Baptist Conferences of North Carolina with the Southern Christian church, we urge and advise as a body that the North Carolina State Convention of Free Will Baptist to defeat all movements having a tendency to destroy our independence, faith and practice.

Be it further resolved that this General Conference in its 1923 session urge all our state conventions and conferences to remain steadfast, always abounding in the faith of the Free Will

Baptist church with every institution of the Lord that may be found in the New Testament.

The above resolution was adopted.

Resolution of Warning by J. W. Alford.

Realizing that in the past our denomination in many places has suffered much at hands of false and treacherous brethren, and that even yet, there are movements on foot for their further betrayal of our church, which would lead to the loss of our identity and independence, with the loss of our institutions in which are invested many thousands of dollars, and knowing that history is in the habit of repeating itself, therefore be resolved,

1st. That in view of the many losses sustained by us, among which we mention, Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Mich., The Morning Star Publishing House, Boston, Mass., and others which space forbids to mention, we warn our brethren everywhere against any and all alliances with any and all other denominations.

2nd. That remembering the warning given to us by the Ohio River Yearly Meeting brethren, we give to them an expression of our appreciation for their firm stand on the question of coalite or alliance by a rising vote.

The above resolution was adopted.

Resolution on Hospitality, by Rev. J. E. Hudgens.

Resolved, That we express to the brethren of Damascus Free Will Baptist church and friends in the vicinity, our sincere appreciation for the generous hospitality accorded us during the sitting of this Conference.

Report adopted.

By motion, the secretary was requested to prepare manuscript for the press and that he have 1200 minutes printed and distribute among the various Conferences and Associations. And that he be allowed \$10.00 for his service.

Rev. T. B. Mellette tendered an invitation for the Conference to meet at some place in South Carolina in its next session. The invitation was accepted and the Conference will hold next session at some place in South Carolina which will be made known later.

All business having been transacted, the Conference came to

a close to meet again in regular session on Wednesday May 21, 1924.

JNO. L. WELCH, Moderator.

E. C. MORRIS, Recording Secretary.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

Preamble.

In a meeting called to meet with Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist church, in which meeting was represented the Original Free Will Baptist of the following states: Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio and Tennessee. In this meeting a committee of five was appointed to draft a Constitution and By-Laws, by which this organization shall be governed.

Section 1. This organization shall be known as The General Conference of the Original Free Will Baptist of the United States.

Section II. The object of the organization shall be to bring together our people throughout the United States, for the purpose of counseling for the general interest of our denomination.

Section III. This organization shall be composed of the various Associations, Conferences and Conventions of the above named states, together with other like bodies of the same faith and practice, which may hereafter be admitted.

Section IV. Each Association or Conference shall be allowed two representatives, and the State Convention of the states shall be allowed one representative each. However, a minister in good standing in his Conference or Association, shall have full right to counsel with us in all our discussions, but the right to vote is allowed only to the legal representative of said Conference or Association.

Section V. Article 1. The officers of this organization shall consist of a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, a Secretary and Treasurer, which shall be elected for a term of years. There shall be elected also, an executive committee of five, who shall serve a term except the first four mentioned, who shall serve for a term of one, two, three and four years respectively.

Article 2. This organization shall have a credential committee composed of one representative from each state. The moderator exercising authority to appoint said committee, and such other committees as the body may deem proper.

Article 3. Each Association, Conference or Convention belonging to this body shall be requested to donate the sum of ten dollars (\$10.00) annually for the promotion of the interest of this organization.

Article 4. Each representative shall be required to present credentials together with a report from the body represented.

Article 5. The members of this organization shall be governed by the usual parliamentary rules and usages of deliberative bodies.

Section VI.—This body shall hold its sessions annually, convening on Wednesday before the last Sunday in each May, at such place as may be designated by the Executive Committee.

Section VII. This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two thirds majority of the members present in any regular session; but vote on the amendment shall not be taken until the day following the offering of said amendment.