

MINUTES
OF THE
FIFTH ANNUAL SESSION
OF THE
John Thomas Association

HELD WITH
Big Springs Church

WISE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

September 11-14, 1927.

AYDEN, N. C.
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PROCEEDINGS

The John Thomas Yearly Meeting met with Big Spring Church, on Thursday before the second Sunday in September 1927. The introductory sermon was preached by W. R. Stallard. Text: 2 Timothy 2:15.

1. Conference met at 2:30 P. M. Reading and prayer by W. R. Bise, Clerk.

2. Enrollment of delegates from Wise County Quarterly Meeting as follows: J. W. Dickenson, J. M. Dickenson, J. J. Gilla, E. M. Day, W. M. Music, Matilda Hensley, Alta Adams, Margaret Wheatley, Grandma Johnson, W. F. Hood, Mattie Cox. Dickenson County Quarterly Meeting: W. S. G. Mead, S. P. Reedy, H. H. Stanley, Mattie Bise, and E. R. Powers.

3. Election of officers as follows: W. R. Stallard, Moderator; W. R. Bise, Clerk; J. W. Dickenson, Treasurer.

4. Enrollment of ministers present:—S. M. McFall, W. R. Stallard, C. H. Johnson, E. A. Reedy, Della Salyer, Monroe Hubbard, John Condre, J. T. Davis, H. M. Smith, J. M. Sharpe, R. M. Begley, Lilburn Scott, J. A. Hood, C. J. Robbinette, and W. R. Bise.

5. Corresponding Messengers.—J. C. Rasnake, Mary Rasnake, J. C. Lockheart, B. D. Blankew.

6. Appointment of Committees as follows:

Business Committee.—S. M. McFall, E. A. Reedy, and Monroe Hubbard.

Supply of Pulpit.—J. M. Dickenson, J. J. Gilla, and Isham Mullins.

Next Session.—H. M. Smith, N. H. Stanley, and Della Salyer.

Sunday School.—W. W. Adams, John Condre, and C. H. Johnson.

Moved and carried that we adjourn till 8:30 Friday morning.

Preaching at 8 P. M., by C. H. Johnson and Lilburn Scott.

Text: Matt. 5:12.

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION.

Met as per adjournment. Reading by W. R. Stallard. Prayer by John Condre. We then took up the work of the Yearly Meetings.

Dickenson County Quarterly Meeting.—Report read and received. Churches passed good.

Wise County Quarterly Meeting.—Moved and seconded that it be laid over, till the afternoon session.

Moved and carried that we adjourn till 2:30 P. M.

Preaching at 11 A. M., by J. C. Rasnake and W. R. Bise. Text: Heb. 11:10.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION.

Met according of adjournment. Reading by W. R. Stallard, Prayer by I. A. Wampler. Moved and seconded that Wise County Quarterly Meeting report be heard. It was read and the characters were passed good.

Reports of committees previously appointed.

Report of business committee.

We recommend that the following by-laws and amendments be added to the by-laws that we already have.

1. That each church elects its pastor in the month of August.
2. That each delegates report to the Yearly Meeting the name of their pastor and their regular meeting time.
3. In article 24 change the time from fifteen minutes to five minutes.
4. That we place in our minutes a form of a church letter and dismissal.
5. At the first meeting of the pastor with his church after the yearly meeting, the church elect all of its officers, which are to serve until after the the next yearly meeting.
6. That pastors be elected by ballot.
7. The moderator, clerk and treasurer to be elected by ballot, a majority to rule.
8. The pastor of each church on his first appointment after the yearly meeting to elect or re-elect a finance committee. The following is to be added to the duties of the finance committee.
9. That any member who is willing to serve as a member of the finance committee, voluntarily oblige themselves to pay into the church treasury 50c. per month, and they are to solicit help from other members.
10. We, your Business Committee in the spirit of love and for the betterment of God's cause report as follows: We recommend that this body ordain Bros. Monroe Hubbard and C. A. Robinette. We refer Bros. Davis and Condre back to the Quarterly Meeting.

REPORT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

We, your committee on Sunday School, beg leave to report:

We recommend, that all churches use every effort to build up and keep in order a Sunday School in every church. If there is any church without a Sunday School we urge them to organize one.

W. W. ADAMS,
H. M. SMITH,
C. H. JOHNSON,

Committee.

REPORT ON NEXT SESSION.

We, your committee on Next Session, report that the next session be with Rugby Church, beginning on Thursday before the second Sunday in September 1928.

Corresponding messengers called for and received as follows: J. C. Rasnake and Mary Rasnake from Sandy Valley Yearly Meeting.

Moved and carried that we adjourn till 8:00 A. M. Saturday.

There was preaching at 3:30 P. M., by J. T. Davis and John Condre. Text: Matt. 20:24, 25. Preaching at 8 P. M., by E. A. Reedy and H. M. Smith. Text: 2 Cor. 4.

Also W. T. Nunnley from Union Association was received as a corresponding messenger.

SATURDAY MORNING SESSION.

Reading by W. R. Stallard. Prayer by Bro. Hood. The following corresponding messengers were appointed:

To Sandy Valley Yearly Meeting:—W. R. Bise, E. A. Reedy, and N. H. Stanley.

To Clinch Valley Yearly Meeting.—June Hood and John Shoop.

Ordaining Council of Wise County Quarterly Meeting.—H. V. Johnson, S. M. McFall, and H. M. Smith.

For Dickenson County Quarterly Meeting.—E. A. Reedy, W. R. Bise and A. F. Hugh.

Moved and carried that we adjourn till Thursday before the second Sunday in September 1928.

MINISTERS' CONFERENCE.

1. Elected W. R. Stallard, Moderator and W. R. Bise, Clerk.

Enrollment of Ministers Present.

S. M. McFall, H. M. Smith, E. A. Reedy, W. R. Bise, W. R. Stallard, C. H. Johnson, Monroe Hubbard, John Condre, C. A. Robinette, J. M. Shoop, Lilburn Scott, J. A. Hood, J. T. Davis, W. B. Galloway, L. J. Fields, H. S. Wilson, Della Salyer, Callie Wilson, B. D. Blanton.

Ministers Not Present.

D. T. Smith, J. G. Kennedy, F. T. Kennedy, W. J. Keith, Tracy Robertson, A. F. Hughs, S. P. Davis, H. V. Johnson, J. M. Shutes, E. M. Green, Clay Ashburn, R. A. Powers, C. H. Stallard, Joe Patterson, John Cook, T. J. Davenport, C. C. Wright, Dan Begley, I. N. Mills, J. M. Hays, Luther Anderson.

Moved and carried that we adjourn till 2:20 P. M. Preaching at 11 A. M., by Della Salyer and Mrs. Lev. Wilson. Text: Num. 24:17.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Met according to adjournment. Song by choir. We then took up the reports as to the characters of our ministers as a whole and we passed them good.

Appointment of Evangelists.

For Wise County.—W. R. Stallard.

Dickenson County.—H. M. Smith.

Report of Treasurer.

We have on hand \$40.00.

Preaching at 3:30 by C. A. Robinette and H. M. Smith. Text: Acts 20:17.

Preaching at 8 P. M., by W. T. Nunley and W. R. Stallard. Text: John 3:13, 14.

Preaching on Sunday at 11 A. M., by J. C. Rasnake and Monroe Hubbard. Text.—Gen. 45:28.

Moved and carried that we adjourn till Thursday before the second Sunday in September 1928.

W. R. STALLARD, Mod.

W. R. BISE, Clerk.

REPORTS OF MINISTERS.

Report of W. B. Galloway, Big Stone Gap, Route No. 1.—I have preached 30 sermons, helped to baptize two, labored in one revival, took part in one memorial service, superintended one Sunday school, and travelled about 349 miles.

Report of J. F. Welch, Coeburn, Wise County, Va., Box 559.—I have pastored two churches, tried to preach about 35 times, labored in four revivals, witnessed a few conversions, travelled about 154 miles, received less than \$5.00. May God forgive me for doing such a little in his service.

Report of J. M. Sheets.—I preached about 30 sermons, travelled about 60 miles, preached two funerals, married four couples, held two funeral services.

Report of J. L. Fields, West Norton, Va.—I have pastored one church, helped in four revivals, witnessed about 58 conversions, baptized seven, received nine into the church, helped to organize one church, preached about 30 sermons, received about \$26.00 on pastoral work.

Report of E. A. Reedy, Fremont, Va.—I wish to submit the following report: I have preached 120 sermons, six funerals, seven burials, married five couples, received \$45.00 for benevolent purposes, donated \$35.00 to the same.

Report of H. V. Johnston, Dorchester, Va.—I have preached three Sundays and Saturdays before.

Report of W. R. Stallard, Big Stone Gap, Va., Route 1, Box 146.—I have preached 196 sermons, witnessed 34 conversions, labored in nine revivals, conducted four burial services, helped in five memorial services, received 14 into churches, helped license three preachers, moderator at three quarterly meetings, baptized seven, received by gift and donation \$186.33, married two couples, travelled 1336 miles.

Brethren, pray for me, that I may finish my work in righteousness. I pastored two churches. The above is the work of an evangelist for the past year 1927.

Report of R. A. Powers, Toms Creek, Va.—I have preached 150 sermons, conducted four revivals, witnessed 35 conversions, baptized 21, conducted 20 burial services, received \$75.00, travelling expenses \$75.00, travelled about 300 miles. Greetings to you, my dear brethren.

Report of S. M. McFall, Coeburn, Va.—I have preached 80 sermons, baptized 8, received 15 into the church, conducted 40 funeral services, five memorial services, pastored four churches, married 10 couples, received about \$150.00, travelled 800 miles.

Report of W. R. Bise, Millard, Va.—I have preached 40 sermons, assisted the pastor at one church, conducted two burial services, organized one Sunday School, gave \$10.00 to the church.

Report of Sylvan Wilson, Big Stone Gap, Va., Route 1, Box 62.—I have preached 32 sermons, took part in about three revivals, witnessed a number of conversions, celebrated one marriage, preached two memorial sermons, one funeral. Dear sisters and brethren, pray for me, that while this out-

ward man is rapidly decaying, that the inward man may be strengthened day by day.

Report of J. A. Hood, Big Stone Gap, Va., Route 2, Box 173.—I have pastored one church all the year and another part of the time; organized one church, received 14 members into the church, baptized eight, organized one Sabbath School; helped organize two other schools, held three revivals and labored in three others, witnessed 22 conversions, preached three funerals, received \$33.00, spent \$6.00 for church services and the support of the Gospel, preached 92 sermons in all.

Report of C. A. Johnson, Foraker, Va.—I have pastored one church, received three into the church, baptized six, married one couple.

REPORT FROM THE WISE COUNTY QUARTERLY MEETING.

To the John Thomas Association from the 8th to the 11th of September 1927:

We have 13 churches and 21 ministers, with a membership of 565; value of church property \$13,400. We have nine Sunday Schools with an enrollment of 602 scholars. We have chosen to represent us in the association the following delegates from each church namely:

From Wilson Chapel Church:—J. L. Sandow and Grandma Johnston.

From Dale's Ridge:—Ed. Culberston, C. C. Bryant.

From Hopkins Chapel:—Emmitt Day and Tilda Hencely.

From Ramsey Church:—W. M. Music, W. T. Hurd.

From Mountain View:—Margie Robinette, W. B. Powers.

From Mary's Chapel:—E. J. Kilgore, W. S. Powers.

From West Norton:—Wilborn Bradley, Mrs. W. W. Adams.

From Cherry Grove Church:—H. U. Addington, Ed Pate.

From Big Spring:—John Matt Dickenson, J. J. Gilly.

From Union Church:—J. H. Scarberry, Arthur Castile.

From Steens Chapel:—Margaret Wheatley, Mattie Cox.

From Crest Church:—John Condre and S. V. Scalf.

From Bowen's Chapel:—C. C. Colton, Emely Hood.

We do furthermore recommend our beloved brethren to the Yearly Meeting or Ordaining Council to be ordained to preach the Gospel, named as follows: C. A. Robinette, Munroe Hubbard, John Condre.

C. A. ROBINETTE, Clerk.

Report of Dickenson County Quarterly Meeting to the Association.

To the John Thomas Association of the Free Will Baptist, to convene with Big Spring Church, Wise County, Va., on Thursday before the Second Sunday in September 1927, Greeting:

We have seven churches with a membership of 225; value of church property \$5,000. We have eight ministers all in good standing.

By a move and a second we ask the Association to ask their ministers not to put in their reports; the amounts received by donations to them.

W. R. BISE, Moderator.

N. H. STANLEY, Clerk.

REPORT FROM THE SANDY VALLEY ASSOCIATION.

Richlands, Va., August 27, 1927.

To the John Thomas Association of Free Will Baptist, to convene with Big Spring Church, Wise County, Va., Thursday before the second Sunday in September 1927.

Greetings:—We, the Sandy Valley Association now in session with Little Star church, do elect and send our beloved brethren and sisters as corresponding messengers to be with you in your conference: J. C. Rasnake, Mary A. Rasnake.

We will give our standing in two quarterly meeting boundaries: We have in them eight local churches with a membership of 296. We have 17 ordained ministers all in good fellowship.

Our next association will be held with Austin Chapel Church, Council, Buchanan County, Va. Railroad stations at Honaker and Drill, Va. A cordial invitation is extended to you all.

We prayefully submit this correspondence,

E. A. REEDY, Moderator.

G. W. PRESLEY, Clerk.

OBITUARIES.

BALL.—It gives us sorrow to write the following statement: That we the Big Spring Church, have lost one of our brothers, W. M. Ball, a brother about 70 years of age. He has spent the most of his life in the enjoyment of God's love, and near three years in the Free Will Baptist church. He has left a host of friends to mourn their loss.

He has about eight children that can hear him lift his voice in prayer no more. He has made friends everywhere he has gone. O the absence of a faithful servant of God. How we miss him! None his place can fill.

We miss him in leading prayer meetings. We miss him in telling his experience and hope of eternal life. We hear him no more shouting praises to God. We can only comfort ourselves by saying, "Father, thy will be done." We believe that he has fought a good fight, and finished his course, and that he has obtained the crown.

So let us all live the life which God would expect, so that when death shall come that we can see Bro. Ball and all the redeemed of the Lord, never again to part.

Written by

SYLVAN WILSON.

BLEDSON.—Mrs. Kizie Bledson was born March 14, 1845 and died March 4, 1927. She was the mother of three children, two sons and one daughter. The daughter out-stripped her and went on 47 years ago. Sister Bledson professed faith in Christ 25 years before her death but never attached herself to any church. She was a good mother and often prayed for her children. She left behind her two sons, 15 grandchildren, and a host of friends and loved ones. Funeral service was conducted at the home of her son, Morgan, near East Stone Gap, Va., by Rev. S. M. McFalls and Rev. W.

B. Galloway, and the body laid to rest in East Stone Gap Cemetery.

Written by a freind of Bro. Morgan Bledsoe and family.

FIELDS.—Little Paul Fields, son of Bro. L. J. and Sister Janie Felds, was born at Dooley Virginia, on October 8, 1924, and died on December 18, 1926, aged two years, one month and 10 days. Little Paul had an attack of Pnuemonia Fever and he failed to recover. He left behind his twin sister Pauline, two sisters and two brothers, father and mother and a host of friends. Funeral service was conducted at West Norton Free Will Baptist Church, December 19, 1926, by Rev. Sylvan Wilson, Sister Della Salyer and W. B. Galloway. The body was laid to rest in a cemetery near by.

Let us remember when dark clouds hover around us and we are bereft of those most dear, if we will remember the words of him who died on the Cross that we might live, our sorrow and burdens will be much easier to bear and after a while the sun will shine through. We can offer no greater consolation than the words of the song, "God Shall Wipe Away all Tears."

Written by

W. B. GALLOWAY.

DAY.—Sister Ellen Day, wife of Captain Day, was born March 27, 1855, departed this life, May 7, 1926, aged 70 years, one month and ten days.

She was the mother of eight children, seven girls and one boy. One girl is dead, the rest are still living. She professed faith in Christ about eighteen years ago, and united with the Hopkins Free Will Baptist church. She was baptized in Wise County, and lived a faithful member until death.

She was always ready to do her part as a Christian, but she has gone to join her husband and loved ones who have gone before. She leaves one boy, and six girls to mourn the loss of mother while she joins the angels to await their coming.

Prepared by W. R. S. _____

SEXTON.—Mrs. Rachel Sexton, wife of Charles Sexton, died Sunday morning, February 1, 1926, aged 46 years, six months and eight days. She was buried on Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. S. M. McFall. She was born August 8, 1880.

She was the daughter of John and Nancy Cawder. She is survived by her husband and seven children, five sons and two daughters. Two children preceded her to the grave.

Sister Sexton was a member of the Free Will Baptist church, a devoted wife and mother. She was a woman well liked by all who knew her. We all miss her presence, and we trust that her husband and children will meet her in heaven. Sister Sexton leaves in addition to those mentioned above, a father and mother, three brothers and one sister.

ALTHA ADAMS.

COUNTS.—Rev. C. K. Counts was born April 6, 1863, died January 15, 1926, aged 62 years, nine months, and nine days. He married Miss Dulcie Kennedy September 17, 1886. To this union was born one daughter, who is now living in Appalachia.

Dulcie, his first wife, departed this life February 7, 1917. He was married again to Miss Edna Lane February 18, 1918, and to them was born one son, C. K. Counts, Jr. His wife did all that she could for him. She stood by his side till his spirit went to God who gave it.

He was converted about 35 years ago and he united with the Free Will Baptist church, and he finally decided that God had called him into the ministry. So he was a faithful preacher for about 20 years until God called him away from this world.

He was one of the pioneers who came to Coeburn and he proved to be a successful business man, as well as a man who stood for truth and righteousness. I have spent many a happy hour with Bro. Counts in the ministry. Well do I remember when he was on the ordaining Council that ordained me, and he helped me to do my duty that I owed to God.

It was a great pleasure to hear him preach, because there was no foolishness in his preaching; for he preached a straight Gospel sermon.

In the passing of this wonderful man, his church has lost a loyal member, his wife a faithful companion, his two children, a loving father; and his associates, a noble friend. A good man is gone, his personal work is ended; but yet he lives, not only in that fuller life; but he lives even here in the inspiration of us who knew him best and loved him most.

He leaves to mourn a wife, two children, two brothers and a host of relatives and friends.

He is gone but not forgotten,
Never will his memory fade;
Sweetest thoughts will ever linger,
Around the grave where he is laid.

S. M. McFALL.

Coeburn, Va.

T. E. BISE.—T. E. Bise, son of W. R. Bise and Mincie Bise was born in Dickenson County, Va., June 1, 1895. He was called to rest March 1, 1927.

He married Miss Mattie Reedy in April 1915. She was a daughter of Rev. E. A. Reedy. He united with the Free Will Baptist church in May 1916, and he proved faithful unto God will death. He served as clerk in his church for several years and he proved to be a faithful member.

One of the greatest delights of his life was his singing choir. I have seen him lead his singing class when he was hardly able to sit up. I would say "Ed," as we called him, "Let some one else lead your class." He would reply, "It is a duty I owe to God. No one else can do it for me." With all his suffering caused by the dreadful disease T. B., you would always find him cheerful.

Just before he died, he called a part of his people to his bedside and said to his only brother, "Ted, give me your hand, and promise me that you will meet me in heaven." And with a broken heart he promised his dying brother that he would meet him there.

His loving wife stood by him, and did all she could for him, until God

called him home to rest. He told his wife that he was ready to go, but I do not want to leave you alone in the world.

He arranged his own funeral and memorial service before he died. His request was that S. M. McFall, W. R. Stallard, and H. V. Johnston, should preach his funeral and attend his memorial service which was held on the first Sunday in August as follows: Morning service by H. V. Johnston, W. R. Stallard, and S. M. McFall; evening service by A. F. Hughes, Della Salver, and D. L. Smith, and that his home choir should do the singing, led by Bro. Bud Beverly. It was estimated by some of the people that were present, that there were from 1500 to 2000 people at his memorial service, which was held at the cemetery near Fremont, Va.

We mourn not for him as for those who have no hope, for we have a sweet hope that he is at rest. We will say to his loved ones that are left behind not to mourn his death. Look unto him who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. "Cast all your cares upon him, for he careth for you."

Sleep on, dear Ed,
Till God shall call,
And then arise no more to fall.

Written by a friend,

S. M. McFALL.

Coeburn, Va., September 19, 1927.

RATCLIFF.—J. H. Ratcliff was born October 14, 1888, died October 10, 1925. He was son of John H. Ratcliff and Sarah J. Ratcliff.

April 27, 1916 he was united in marriage to Minnie Belle Counts, and to this union were born four children, of which all four have gone on to heaven.

Friends and loved ones did all they could for him, but they could not stay the hand of death. He was ever true and loved by all who knew him.

He was a loving husband. The night before he died he told his wife to pray for him. He said that it would be more help to him than what the doctor could do for him, for I am putting my trust in God.

He told his wife that he was ready to go, and she stayed by his bedside until his spirit went to the God who gave it.

He leaves to mourn a wife, father, one brother and three sisters and a host of relatives and friends.

We are so sad and lonely,
Since father passed away;
But we are waiting long to meet him,
In that resurrection day.

S. M. McFALL.

Coeburn, Va.

BY-LAWS OF MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

1. There shall be a Ministers' Conference held annually in connection with the Yearly Meeting.
2. The object of the Ministerial Conference is to discuss points of doctrine, and examine the Christian character of the ministers.
3. Every minister in the John Thomas Yearly Meeting is required to attach themselves to the Ministers' Conference and must be governed by the rules and regulations of the Ministers' Conference.
4. Every Minister belonging to the Conference is required to report themselves to the Conference annually, either in person or by letter or both.
5. Any minister failing to report for two years in succession without a reasonable excuse shall be reprimanded and if they still disregard this requirement they may be dismissed from the Conference.
6. Any minister moving to another Yearly Meeting shall take a letter of dismission and commendation so that they may properly unite themselves to the Yearly Meeting where they move.

THE MINISTRY

No member of our connection shall be at liberty to take upon himself the public ministry of the Word, unless he feels divinely called, and make report of the same to the church, to which he belongs, and if the church shall be satisfied with his qualifications, and call of such person, then she may grant said person the liberty to exercise his or her gifts by exhortation, for twelve months, or near it.

2. If they prove satisfactory to the church, then the church may recommend them to the Quarterly Meeting, which may grant them license to preach the Gospel, for twelve months, or near it, with all the privileges of the Free Will Baptist denomination, except baptism, pastoring churches, and the ordinances of the Lord's house. And if they prove satisfactory to the Quarterly Meeting, then they may recommend said person to the Yearly Meeting for ordination.

3. The ordaining council must be appointed by the Yearly Meeting. Not less than three nor more than five ordained ministers, for a period of twelve months. Any three may legally transact the business of examining the applicants for ordination.

4. When a minister of another denomination, wishes to unite with the Free Will Baptist, he or she must first join the church. Then the proceedings are the same as with licentiates.

5. Any ministers leaving the Free Will Baptist Church and desiring to be reinstated, shall be dealt with as though they had never belonged to the church.

6. If a minister becomes disorderly, or preaches a doctrine contrary to the Free Will Baptist faith, the minister may at once be called to question by the church offended. They must be given a fair and impartial trial, by evidence mainly by the Free Will Baptist members, if the charges shall be sustained, they shall be dealt with as follows:

The church having the exclusive right to deal with the ministers under their care.

If the charges are against a licentiate, it must be reported to the Quarterly Meeting, and their decision shall be final.

If the charges are against an ordained minister, then the Quarterly Meeting shall report to, or call the ordaining council together, and they shall try the case, and their decision shall be final.

7. Any ordained minister of the Free Will Baptist may serve the church in the absence of the pastor, in every Gospel order required of him by the church.

J. G. KENNEDY
F. J. KENNEDY
W. R. STALLARD.

THE ORGANIZATION OF A CHURCH

1. When any number of believers desire to be organized into a Free Will Baptist church, they are examined by one or more regular Free Will Baptist ministers in reference to their Christian character, doctrine, and ability to sustain a church. If the examination is satisfactory the applicants are organized into the church as follows: The Bible is presented as the only rule of faith and practice. The Church Covenant shall be adopted. A prayer of consecration offered. The hand of fellowship is given. Then officers are elected.

2. There shall be male members enough to fill the public offices in the church, in order that a regular discipline may be kept up.

3. After being thus constituted, they shall be at liberty out of the number of regularly ordained ministers, to choose a pastor who shall preside over them.

OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

The officers of a church are a Board of Trustees, Clerk, Treasurer, Deacons and Deaconesses, Finance Committee and pastor.

Board of Trustees.—The duty of the trustees shall be to hold title to all property, either in fee or gift, and to maintain all rights to same to convey said property in the discretion of a four-fifths majority of those present at a regular quarterly meeting, being announced at said church three months prior to said meeting.

Clerk.—It is the duty of the clerk to keep a church book and in it record the Church Covenant, the names of the members, and all the proceedings of the church, in the exercise of its discipline and management of its temporal affairs. He also signs all the letters and other communications made by authority of the church.

Treasurer.—The treasurer shall be entrusted with the funds of the church, and it shall be his duty to keep a regular account of all the money received, and from whom, and make a report of the same annually to the

church, or oftener if necessary, which funds shall be drawn on the treasurer only by the order of the church.

Deacons.—The deacons are elected for life or during good behavior. They should be men distinguished among their brethren for piety and benevolence. Before entering upon the duties of their office they are ordained by the pastor or other regular minister. Ordination consisting of charge, laying on of hands and prayer. It is their duty to serve at the Lord's table, to distribute of the bounty of the church among its needy members, to visit the sick, to assist the pastor in promoting order in attendance upon the church, and to conduct religious meetings in the absence of the pastor.

Deaconesses.—They assist the deacons and the finance committee, in visiting the sick, in collecting funds and distributing among the needy members, and enforcing proper discipline among the female members.

Finance Committee.—These have the general management of the finances of the church, subject to the church's control.

Pastor.—Each church elects its own pastor out of the regularly ordained ministers, upon such terms as may be agreed upon between the parties themselves. It is the pastor's duty faithfully to preach the Word, to have the general superintendence of the church, to be himself an example to the flock, to visit the members, especially the sick as he has the opportunity, and to do all within his power to promote the religious interest of the church which he serves, and to advance the cause of Christ among men.

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

Any person who gives evidence of a change of heart, professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and has been immersed by a proper administrator, church covenant read, explained and accepted is received to membership by a vote of the church.

From other churches immersed persons are received by letter. No one, against whom any valid objection is made is received to membership. When any member objects to the reception of an applicant, the matter is deferred until the church can ascertain the nature of the objection. If, in the opinion of the church, the objection is not a valid one, the applicant may be received. Excluded members are received again only when they confess their errors and give evidence of repentance. Persons excluded from other churches are not received, unless it be made evident that they were excluded upon unjustifiable grounds. The hand of fellowship is extended to all who are received into the membership of the church.

DISMISSION OF MEMBERS

Only members in good standing are dismissed from the church, and these for no other reason than to unite with some other church. Such members receive letters of honorable dismission and commendation, but are under the watch care of the same church until they are received into some other. A withdrawal without such letter of commendation is equivalent to excommunication, and treated as such by the church.

MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

Each church meets as often as practicable for the public worship of God.

The times of celebrating the Lord's Supper, washing feet, and of business meetings are arranged by each local church to suit its own convenience.

Each church is required to observe the ordinances. Feet washing follows the Lord's Supper.

Conference or business meetings are opened and closed with suitable devotional exercise. The pastor acts as moderator of the business meetings of the church. In the absence of the pastor the church may meet when necessary and attend to ordinary business; but no member is excluded in the absence of the pastor.

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been brought, as we believe, by the divine grace to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Preserver, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant and agree, by God's help, to walk together in brotherly love.

We, therefore, enter into covenant as members of this church and as Christians, that we will watch over each other in love, sharing together each other's joys and sorrows; that we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor omit the great duty of prayer for ourselves and others; that by divine assistance we will endeavor to bring up those under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; that in all things we will strive to exemplify our profession by a corresponding practice, to abstain from all sinful conformity to the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in all our deportment; that we will abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage; that we will sustain the worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine of the church; that we will contribute cheerfully, according to our ability, to the support of the ministry, the expense of the church, the relief of the poor and the general spread of the Gospel.

In keeping this solemn Covenant may we ever enjoy the blessings and presence of the Great Head of the Church.

BY-LAWS MOTIONS, ETC., OF JOHN THOMAS YEARLY MEETING.

1. A conference shall be annually held.
2. No conference shall be held with less than three ordained ministers, and four delegates belonging to this Yearly Meeting.
3. Officers of this Yearly Meeting shall be, moderator, clerk and treasurer, who shall be elected annually.
4. At the opening of each conference, the clerk's book shall be presented, and the proceedings of last conference read.
5. The object of the Annual Conference shall be to promote Christ's

Kingdom among men by means in strict conformity to the Holy Scriptures.

6. These conferences shall be composed of the ministers who are members of the Quarterly Meetings belonging to the body, and of delegates from these Quarterly meetings, each Quarterly meeting being entitled to as many delegates as each conference shall think proper.

7. The delegates from each Quarterly meeting shall bear to the conference a letter certifying their appointment, showing the condition and statistics of the Quarterly meeting, and giving a statement of all funds raised during the year for denominational or other benevolent purposes.

8. This conference may at each regular meeting, elect as many boards or standing committees as may be necessary in carrying out its benevolent purposes. These shall keep a record of their proceedings and make a report at each regular meeting of the conference.

9. Any Quarterly meeting desiring to become a member of this body shall present her petition at a regular session of the conference, through delegates appointed for that purpose. If she be received, the moderator shall extend to her delegates the hand of fellowship.

10. The conference may extend to visiting brethren all the privileges of the body, save that of voting.

11. This constitution may be amended at any regular session by vote of four-fifths of the members present of the conference in session.

12. If any member in the judgment of the conference, shall show anger in his discussion on any subject, he shall forfeit his seat in that conference.

13. No member of the general conference shall be at liberty to withdraw without leave of the moderator.

14. The conference shall always adjourn by vote.

15. There shall annually be a committee of finance chosen to settle with the treasurer and report to conference.

16. Conference shall always open and adjourn by prayer and praise of God.

17. A motion must be made by one member, seconded by another, and afterwards stated by the moderator, before it is debated. A motion shall be reduced to writing by the mover at the demand of any one member.

18. All resolutions shall be submitted in writing.

19. A motion or resolution may be withdrawn at any time before a decision or amendment by the conference.

20. Any motion or resolution containing more than one distinct proposition shall be devised, provided the call for a division be sustained by the majority.

21. When a member speaks or offers a motion he should rise and respectfully address the moderator, confine himself to the question under consideration, and avoid all personality or unkind or disrespectful language.

22. When two or more members rise to speak at the same time the Moderator shall decide who is entitled to the floor.

23. While a member is speaking no one shall interrupt him except to call him to order, ask leave to explain or make explanation. The one

allowed to explain, shall confine himself strictly to an actual misunderstanding of language which may need explanation.

24. No member shall speak more than twice, or longer than five minutes at each time, on any question without leave of the Moderator, which leave shall be granted without debate.

25. All committees may be named by the Moderator, by request of the conference.

26. The member first named on a committee shall be its chairman to call the committee together, but after it is convened the committee may elect its own chairman and secretary.

27. Voting shall be done by standing up when a vote is close, or when it becomes necessary to count the affirmative and negative, and in special cases by ballot.

28. The Moderator, in case of a tie, may cast the deciding vote.

29. All members should vote on one side or the other, unless excused by the Moderator.

30. No motion, discussion, or other business, shall be admitted while the vote is being taken.

31. The minutes of the conference shall be signed by the Moderator and the clerk.

W. R. Stallard, Chairman.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

1. We believe that there is but one living, true and eternal God, the Father of whom are all things from everlasting to everlasting, glorious and immutable in all His attributes.—I. Cor. 8:6; Isa. 40:28.

2. We believe that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things the only begotten Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, whom God freely sent into this world, because of the great love wherewith He loved the world; and Christ as freely gave Himself a ransom for all, tasting death for every man; who was buried and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, from whence we look for Him the second time in the clouds of heaven at the last day to judge both quick and dead.—I. Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 2:9; St. John 3:16. Rev. 1:7; Acts 24:15; I. John 2:2.

3. We believe that there is one Holy Ghost, the precious gift of the Father through His dear Son, unto the world, who quickeneth and draweth sinners home to God.—St. John 16:7, 8; Acts 2:4; Eph. 2:1; Eph. 4:4-6.

4. We believe in the beginning God made man upright, and placed him in a state of glory without the least mixture of misery, from which he voluntarily by transgression, fell, and by that means brought on himself a miserable and mortal state subject to death.—Gen. 2:17; 3:19.

5. We believe that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and the knowledge of truth, that they might be saved; for which end Christ hath commanded the Gospel to be preached among all nations and to every creature.—Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 3:15-17; I. Tim. 2:4.

6. We believe that no man shall suffer in hell for want of a Christ who died for him, but as the Scripture has said, for denying the Lord that bought them; because they believed not in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Unbelief, therefore, being the cause why the just and righteous God of heaven will condemn the children of men; it follows against all argument that all men at one time or other, are found in such capacity as that through the grace of God they may be eternally saved.—Acts 17:30; Mark 6:6; Heb. 3:10; 1 John 5:1, 10.

7. We believe the whole Scriptures are infallibly true, and that they are the only rules of faith and practice.—II. Tim. 3:16, 17.

8. We believe in the doctrine of General Provision made of God in Christ, for the benefit of all mankind, who repent and believe the Gospel.—Luke 14:16-20; Matt. 23:19, 20; Luke 13:3-5. Acts 3:19; Mark 1:15.

9. We believe that sinners are drawn to God; the Father, by the Holy Ghost, through Christ His Son, and that the Holy Ghost offers His divine aid to all the human family; so as they all might be happy, would they give place to His divine teachings; whereas, such who do not receive the divine impressions of His Holy Spirit, shall, at a future day, own their condemnation just, and charge themselves with their own damnation, for wilfully rejecting the offers of sovereign grace.—Matt. 11:27; St. John 6:45, 65. Ps. 1:1; Tit. 2:11, 12; Jer. 22:29.

10. We believe that men, not considered simply as men, but ungodly men, were of old ordained to condemnation, considered such who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ who bought them, and therefore, shall bring upon themselves swift destruction; but we observe that they, and such the Apostle saith because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved therefore the indignation and wrath of God is upon every soul of man that doeth evil, living and dying therein; for there is no respect of persons with God.—Jude 1:4. II. Peter 2:1; II. Thess. 2:11, 12; Rom. 2:9-11.

11. We believe that all children dying in infancy, having not actually transgressed against the law of God, in their own persons, are only subject to the first death, which was brought on them by the fall of the first Adam, and not that any of them dying in that state, shall suffer punishment in hell by the guilt of Adam's sin, for "of such is the kingdom of God."—I. Cor. 15:22; Matt. 18:2-5; Mark 9:36, 37; Matt. 19:14.

12. We believe that good works are the fruits of a saving faith, and that in the use of the means of grace, and not out of the use of those means, eternal life is promised to men.—Rev. 22:14, 15; Isa. 1:19, 20; Matt. 7:8. Jer. 6:16; Luke 13:34, 35.

13. We believe that no man has any warrant in the Holy Scriptures for justification before God through his own works, power or ability, which he has in and of himself, only as he by grace is made able to come to God through Jesus Christ; believing the righteousness of Jesus Christ to be imputed to all believers for their eternal acceptance with God.—Rom. 4:24; Acts 8:20, 21.

14. We believe that all things are foreseen in the wisdom of God, so that God knoweth whatsoever can or cannot come to pass upon all supposed

conditions; yet not as having decreed any person to everlasting life, out of respect or mere choice farther than He hath appointed the godly unto life, and the ungodly, who die in sin, unto death.—Heb. 4:13; Prov. 8:22-31. Matt. 25:31-46.

15. We believe, as touching Gospel ordinances, in believers' baptism, laying on of hands, receiving of the sacrament in bread and wine, washing the saints' feet, anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, fasting, prayer, singing praise to God, and the public ministry of the Word, with every institution of the Lord we shall find in the New Testament.—Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:17; Acts 19:6; Luke 22:19, 20; John 13:5-17; Jas. 5:14.

16. We believe the Gospel mode of baptism is by immersion, and that believers are the only subjects for baptism.—Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:9, 10; Acts 2:38, 39; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.

17. We believe in a general resurrection of the dead and a final judgment at the last day.—John 5:28, 29; II. Cor. 5:10.

18. We believe the happiness of the righteous is eternal and the torments of the wicked are endless.—Matt. 25:46.

