

Ta Springfield
MINUTES

—OF THE—

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSION

—OF THE—

MOUNT MORIAH

FREE-WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

CONVENED WITH

MOUNT MORIAH CHURCH, PICKENS COUNTY, ALABAMA,

OCTOBER 8th and 10th, 1881.

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LA GRANGE, N. C.:

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1881.

LIST OF ORDAINED MINISTERS AND THEIR POST OFFICES.

1	Elder ELLIS GORE,	Beards Mills,	Pickens, Co.,	Ala.
2	" W. R. LATHAM,	Re-form,	" "	"
3	" W. H. McGEE,	"	" "	"
4	" S. P. McREYNOLDS,	Providence,	" "	"
5	" T. MOLLOY,	Millport,	" "	"
6	" M. E. VAIL,	Military Springs,	Lamar	"
7	" J. M. I. GUYTON,	Vernon,	" "	"
8	" J. R. ROBERTSON,	"	" "	"
9	" W. SPRINGFIELD,	"	" "	"
10	" PETER McGEE,	"	" "	"
11	" JOHN HINTON,	North Port,	Tuscaloosa,	"
12	" BENJ. McCOOL,	Auro,	Lamar	"
13	" B. F. MIXON,	Carrollton,	Pickens	"

RULES OF DECORUM.

ARTICLE 1. The Association shall be called to order by the Moderator who presided at the last Association; former Clerk also officiate, until the Association shall be fully organized.

2. The Association shall be opened and closed by singing and prayer.
3. The Moderator and Clerk shall be chosen by ballot at each Association; a majority of the members present elects.
4. The names of the delegates from the different churches shall be enrolled and called as often as may be necessary during the Association.
5. A majority of the delegates present shall rule in all cases, except in the reception of churches into our body, which must be unanimous.
6. The Moderator shall vote in no case only when the Association is equally divided, but shall have equal right to speak upon any subject, provided he appoint some brother present to the chair while speaking.
7. Only one person shall speak at the same time, who shall arise and address the Moderator.
8. No brother shall be interrupted while speaking; unless he depart from the subject in discussion or use words of personal reflection.
9. No person shall be allowed to speak more than twice on the same subject without leave from the Association, nor more than fifteen minutes at a time.
10. No member shall laugh or talk during the times the debates are going on.
11. No member shall absent himself from the conference without leave from the Moderator.

PROCEEDINGS.

The thirty-first annual session of the Mt. Moriah Free-Will Baptist Association was held with Mt. Moriah church Pickens county, Ala., on the 8th and 10th of Oct. 1881. Introductory sermon by Elder Wood Springfield from 1st John i, 5. After a few minutes recess the Association was called to order by the former Moderator, Elder Ellis Gore; and after requesting Elder J. M. I. Guyton to act as Secretary *pro tem.*, business was proceeded with in the following order:

1. Letters from the churches called for and read, and names of delegates enrolled, as per statistical table.
2. Proceeded to elect a Moderator and Clerk; whereupon Elder Ellis Gore was elected Moderator and Elder J. M. I. Guyton, Clerk.
3. Open the door for reception of churches into our body: a petitionary letter was presented from Mt. Zion church; the church having been organized upon our Articles of Faith; having been examined and found orthodox, was received and the Moderator gave the right hand of fellowship to the delegates and cordially invited them to seats with us, and to participate in our deliberations.
4. Called for correspondence from sister Associations, a letter from Vernon Association read and received.
5. The following committees were appointed:
 - (1) On Finance:—Wm. Hardin, R. S. Fields.
 - (2) On Preaching:—H. M. Ayers, M. W. Dauman, J. H. Estes and the Deacons of Mount Moriah church.
 - (3) On Documents and Order of Business:—Thos. Molloy, W. R. Latham, J. R. Robertson, and the Moderator and Clerk.

6. The committee on preaching reported: Brethren McReynolds preach to-morrow at 10 o'clock, Molloy at 11.

On motion adjourned to meet Monday morning at 8 o'clock.

Sabbath, at 10 o'clock, brother McReynolds preached an excellent and effective sermon to a large and attentive audience. At 11 o'clock, brother Molloy preached to a very large and orderly congregation.

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MONDAY MORNING 8 o'clock,

The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by the Moderator.

7. Minutes of Saturday read and approved.

8. Called for reports of committees.

The committee on Documents reported as follows:

WE RECOMMEND;

(1) That the circular letter written by brother J. M. I. Guyton be read and appended to the minutes.

(2) That the next session of the Association be held with Tabernacle church three miles west of Fernvale Tuscaloosa county Alabama.

(3) That Elder Thomas Molloy write the next circular letter; choose his own subject.

(4) That brother Guyton be continued as Treasurer.

(5) That brother Guyton Superintend the printing of the Minutes.

(6) That, as to discipline, members of other churches joining our churches be required, where it is practical, to bring letters of dismission from their former churches.

(7) That brethren Guyton and Robertson be appointed as corresponding messengers to Vernon Association; brother Guyton corresponding Secretary.

(8) That brother Molloy preach the next introductory Sermon; brother W. H. McGee alternate.

9. That the following resolutions presented by Elder E. Gore be adopted:

(A) *Resolved*, that we recommend the great importance of sustaining the BAPTIST REVIEW, as the success of our cause depends, to a great extent, upon the success of our paper.

(B) *Resolved*, that we patronize and recommend the prohibition law.

(C) *Resolved*, that the pastors of our churches keep up Sabbath Schools.

(D) *Resolved*, that the ministers of the churches ascertain and collect the amount that each church will pay for a missionary to ride during the next Associational year, and report the same to brother Guyton by the first of December next.

On motion the report was adopted and committee discharged.

18. On motion adopted the following resolution offered by Elder J. M. I. Guyton:

That whereas there has been some dissatisfaction as to the distribution of the minutes of this and the Southern Baptist Association; therefore be it resolved that the printer be required to send the minutes to the post offices of the several churches according to the amount paid by each after retaining funds to pay postage &c.

11. Committee on Finance reported \$21.30 for Mt. Moriah Association and \$2.30 for S. B. Association.

12. Called for reports of Union Meetings:

One to be held with Macedonia Church, commencing on Friday before the second Sabbath in August 1882; Elder E. Gore to preach the introductory sermon, Elder J. R. Robertson alternate.

13. Reports of Sabbath-Schools:

Mount Moriah reports a good School in successful operation; Shiloh reports a good School with flattering prospects for the future.

14. On motion our sincere thanks are hereby tendered to Mount Moriah church and vicinity for their

hospitality and kindness during the present session.

15. On motion adjourned to meet on Saturday before the second Sabbath in October 1882, at the place appointed; the Association sung an appropriate hymn and gave the parting hand amid tears of joy.

ELLIS GORE, Moderator.

J. M. I. GUYTON, Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

To the brethren composing the Mount Moriah Free-Will Baptist Association:—

DEAR BRETHREN, at your last session you appointed me to write your next circular, choose my own subject. I have concluded to write a short essay on the Education of the ministry. Then the question arises should we educate our ministers? and if so how is this to be accomplished. First, then we contend that they should be educated. The mind is the one talent which every sane man possesses; and he that will not regulate and employ it to the best advantage, acquires the character and receives the condemnation of "the Slothful Servant." The responsibility of man to educate tells on the immortality of this being. There may be other and more imposing descriptions of hell and heaven; but none, more comprehensive and true than this. "He that is filthy, remains filthy Still," no worse hell can be dreaded; and he that is holy remains holy still; no brighter heaven can be desired.

Ministers are teachers (Matt. xxiii, 18, 19, 20) and therefore, should know more than any other class, for it is their business to teach. All good teaching must flow from copious knowledge. The shallow fountain cannot emit a vigorous stream.

We are told, by some, that we live and learn and die and forget all; but brethren this is a bad mistake, we live and learn

more than we have ever known for then we will be taught by the divine teacher him who never errs. Hence the educated mind here will be better prepared to enter upon the proper training in that world above. Then we must educate: The relative extent of this responsibility, is beyond all measure. It increases with the widening sphere of influence, and augments with the lapse of time.

Sound reverberates through immensity. Education acts and reacts throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Thoughts of the *educated* mind, uttered centuries past, are still telling on the minds of men in the present day. Thoughts the off-spring of the undying mind, inherit an endless duration as their rightful patrimony. And long, long after the worm had feasted on the tongue that uttered, or on the hand that recorded the thoughts of the *educated* mind. Shall the thoughts possess an immortality, in the exercise of which shall they reunite with their parent mind in the enjoyment of bliss, or in the endurance of woe without end.

Taught and sent by the Spirit of God, our youthful brethren need nevertheless to study the Bible; they need to know the rules, and power and right use of their own language; it will be to their advantage to know some what of the language which God honored by selecting them as vehicles of his inspiration; and they will be better prepared to repel the many forms of heresy that now assail the Christian faith; were they to learn something of the history of error and men and the arms by which it has been most successfully combated.

We bless God for the fact that we have a Gore, a Springfield, a Molloy, and a Lewis, men of the largest usefulness, who have never had the advantages of an education. They are self-taught men. Yet with a united voice these men of deserved influence, and most competent to judge are advocating an educated ministry.

Uneducated and self made men have, by the ascendancy of genius, made their way into the halls of Congress, but these are never found advocating the general proposition, that it is best to leave one to educate himself because the perilous experiment has succeeded in their own case.

If education was intended to supersede the teachings of the Holy Spirit; if it were ever to be forgotten that only He can

qualify and commission the heralds of the cross, and that his grace is needed to sanctify and prosper every earthly "aid and appliance," we should unite in execrating as blasphemous arrogance, the attempt of those who would educate the youthful ministers and missionary. But such is not the intent and Spirit of an education. That the human and divine element must be united we learn from the history of Apollas: He was mighty in the Scriptures and fervent in Spirit, and as Luke tells us "he instructed in the way of the Lord"; yet Aquila and Priscilla "taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly." Some oppose an educated ministry because, they say, Our Lord chose His apostles from among the ignorant fishermen. So He did but did not our Lord instruct them in person, for three years, before they were fitted for evangelizing the world?

And, again, for what purpose did Paul go into Arabia, if it were not that he might visit the same scene of savage grandeur and solitude, which, centuries before, had been traversed by Moses as the guest of Jethro, there in solitary communings with his own heart, and his God, to be fitted like his holy predecessor, for large and lasting usefulness?

And, again, did not Christ spend years of seclusion, retirement, and meditation before He commenced His ministry? Whence we conclude that we must have an educated ministry. Now in the second place brethren how are we to accomplish this end? Shall the young brethren be required to study in the scattered and brief remnants of time which they shall be able to save, or borrow from other pursuits? Shall they be required to buy, beg, or borrow the books they may need as best they can?

No brethren, we must establish a Theological School and furnish it with a well stored library some-where within the bounds of the Southern Baptist Association.

I would suggest the following as the first plan: We have in the Southern Baptist Association a membership of 3159, if each member would pay two dollars we should have \$6,318. Some would pay five, some ten &c. Hence, it seems to me that it would be an easy matter to raise \$8000, annually, this would start us a respectable College; provided the Southern Baptist Association proves to be a success; if we should fail in this, as a second plan: We have in our own Association four hundred

and two (402) members, and Vernon Association has five hundred and eighty-nine, (589), making a total of nine hundred and ninety-one, (991), at two dollars, each, we should have one thousand, nine hundred and eighty two (1982) dollars and some will pay more, as we have stated before.

Hence provided, we can get the Vernon Association to unite with us, we can raise two thousand, (\$2000), dollars with which we can start an Academy with a view of organizing a College after a while. Our first plan, if this should fail, I offer as a third, the following: Let us ascertain how many young ministers in our own Association desire an education and make up the money to buy their books, to pay their board and tuition and send them to some good School, until we can make one or the other of the preceding plans a success.

Brethren let us elect trustees, and go to work at once to make the first plan a success; but if we fail in this let us try the Second, and if we fail in this, I know we can make the third a success.

Brethren it is true that we are poor and out of the one hundred and twenty-five (125), Theological Schools in the United States only one belongs to the Free Will Baptist denomination; but let us not become discouraged on this account, for we will, if we properly discharge our duties, constitute a link in the golden chain which reaches the whole distance from earth to heaven.

In conclusion, youthful ministering brethren let me say to you, that you are our future hope and to you belongs the honor of weaving into this chain one link higher than your predecessor. In this let us not be disappointed. Go on then in the attainment of knowledge and ever strike for this link in the golden chain, and your predecessors, many of them, will look down from the higher abode with infinite delight and beckon you up to the skies.

May the Lord bless all our efforts and incline our hearts to the right path.

J. M. I. GUYTON.

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ARTICLES OF FAITH.

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ARTICLE 1. We believe that there is only one true and living God, who is the Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, self-existent Creator of all things, and revealed under the personal distinctions of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, and existing in distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

ART. 2. We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author. Salvation for its end, and Truth for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of this world, the centre of Christian union, the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions will be tried.

ART. 3. We believe that man was created holy, under the law of his Maker, but from voluntary transgression fell from that happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now depraved, and wholly unable of their own free will and ability to recover themselves from the fallen state in which they are by nature.

ART. 4. We believe that God has not fixed the future state of mankind by an absolute and unconditional decree, but salvation is offered in the Gospel free to all, and if sinners are lost forever, it will be their own fault.

ART. 5. We believe that Christ by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and every individual in particular: however, that none but those who believe in Him can be partakers of the divine benefits.

ART. 6. We believe that true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, or from the force and operation of free will, since man in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable either of thinking or doing anything spiritually good.

ART. 7. We believe in a general application of the grace of God to fallen man, sufficiently to enable him morally and actually to obey the requirements of the law of liberty, Ja. 1 ch., 25v.; this is, to act saving faith, John, 1c, 9v.; however, none but those who believe or acquiesce in Christ will be saved thereby—Acts. 17: 31; Rom. 2: 19; John, 3: 19.

ART. 8. We believe in the free moral agency of man, by the grace of God, before and after conversion, and that he is laid under no invincible necessity, by his Creator, to act in any given way; that if he lives after the flesh, he shall die, but if he, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, he shall live, and therefore man is always a proper subject of admonition and exhortation. Heb. 3: 11, 12, 13; Rom. 13: 14; Mark 13: 13; Eze. 18: 24; Lev. 2 and 3ch.; Eze. 33: 13 and 18; 1 Tim.

4: 1; Heb. 3: 5; 1 Cor. 10: 12 and 22v.; 1 Peter 1: 10.

ART. 9. We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercise the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

ART. 10. We believe that Christian baptism is immersion in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that believers are the proper subjects.

ART. 11. We believe that the Lord's Supper is of perpetual obligation, by which the members of the church in the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by solemn self-examination.

ART. 12. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment; that the joys of the righteous, and punishment of the wicked, will be eternal, upon principles of grace and justice.

ART. 13. We believe in open or mixed communion, and the churches of our body are authorized, through their pastors, to invite Christians of all orthodox churches, who are in good standing in their respective churches, to, commune with us at the Lord's table.

STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE MOUNT MORIAH FREE-WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

Number	CHURCHES.	NAMES OF DELEGATES.	PASTORS.	Post Offices of CHURCHES	Rec'd. by Letter	By Experience	Dis. by Letter	Excluded	Total No. Members	Paid for Minutes Mt. Moriah Asso.	Paid for Minutes S. B. Association
1	Mt. Zion.	Ellis C. Co., Joe. Woods	W E Harts	Ellis Gore	Beards Mills, Pickens Co.			1	11		
2	Grace Church	S P McKeynolds, S L McAdams	S P McKeynolds	Saluda, Lamar county	1	5			60	2 00	50
3	Free Hope	H M Ayers, J E McGee, D A Wheeler	J R Robertson	Vernon, " " "	2	7			53	1 70	
4	Mt Pleasant	H Stacy, M W Dunman, A J Hays	M E Vail	" " " "	7	24		5	89	2 50	
5	Corinth	Wood Springfield, B J Loftis	Thos. Molloy	" " " "	2	11			20	2 00	
6	Shiloh	W R Latham, J H Estes	W H McGee	Gordo, Pickens county	3	5			35	2 30	
7	Tabernacle	T Sexton, J R Logan, W T Logan	W H McGee	Fearnvale, Tuscaloosa co.			4	1	25	80	
8	Holly Springs	W G Stricklin, H H Sanders	B F Milson	Carrollton, Pickens, county	2	3		1	20	1 00	50
9	Military Springs	J M I Guyton	T W Springfield	Vernon, Lamar county		2			11	1 00	20
10	Mt Harmony	J R Robertson, and J T Wallace	J R Robertson	" " " "	2	1			30	1 50	
11	Shady Grove	G W Robertson, J Dunn, T A Ayers	J R Robertson	" " " "	2				42	1 85	
12	Mt Zion	T Molloy, W A Molloy	W Springfield	Millport, " " "						1 55	
					19	60	15	8	435	\$21 30	\$2 30