

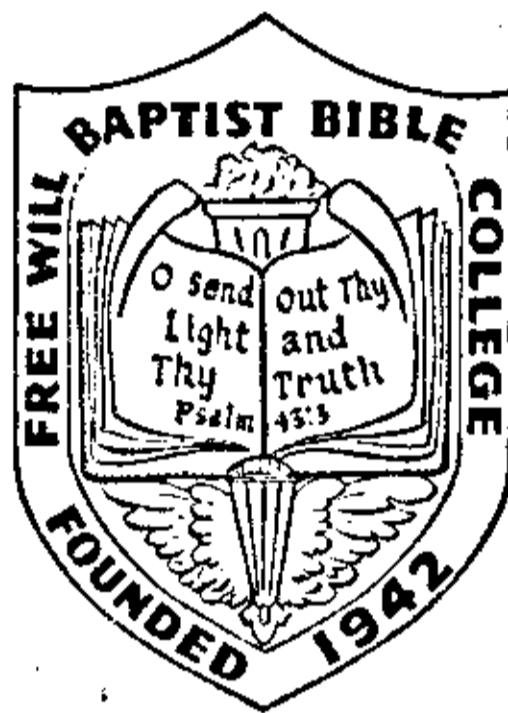
**MINUTES**  
—OF THE—  
TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSION  
—OF THE—  
**VERNON**  
FREEWILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,  
**HELD WITH**

Mt. Harmony Church, Lamar Co., Alabama,  
*October 17, 18. and 19, 1903.*

J. W. PORTER, MODERATOR. J. E. CHAFFIN, CLERK.  
D. G. W. HOLLIS, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

The next session of this Association will meet with Pearce's  
Chapel church, Monroe county, Miss., on Saturday  
before the Third Sunday in October 1904.

COURIER PRINT; VERNON, ALA.



# FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

*Presented by*

Mr. J. M. Hollis

in memory of

Mrs. Susie McDaniel Hollis

## PROCEEDINGS.

The twenty-fourth annual session of the Vernon Free-will Baptist Association was held with Mt. Harmony church, Lamar county, Alabama, October 17, 18 and 19, 1903.

The introductory sermon was preached by Rev. W. R. Cowley, followed by Rev. J. A. Isbell. Text: Matthew 24:35.

After the sermon, an intermission of one hour was taken for recreation and refreshments. Then adjourned to meet at 1 o'clock.

### FIRST DAY—AFTERNOON SESSION.

The association convened pursuant to adjournment. The former moderator and clerk being present, with the members, took their seats and proceeded to business in the following order:

1. The congregation sang a hymn, after which Rev. Woods Springfield led in prayer.

2. Proceeded to permanent organization, by calling for the letters from the different churches.

3. The roll of the churches was called for and the letters handed in and read and the names of delegates enrolled as per statistical table.

4. Opened the door of the association for the reception of new churches into our body, and a letter was handed-in and read from New Hope church, after which a motion was made and carried to receive the above named church into full fellowship, and the moderator extended to them the right hand of fellowship. The name of the church and delegates from it are enrolled in the statistical table.

5. The association being formally organized, proceeded to elect a moderator, clerk and corresponding secretary, whereupon Rev. J. W. Porter was elected moderator; J. E. Choffin, clerk, and Rev. D. G. W. Hollis, corresponding secretary.

The moderator elected was absent from the body, preaching, and there was a motion made and carried that the former moderator serve until the moderator elected could take his seat.

Then the officers took their seats and proceeded to busi-

ness in the following order:

1. Called for corresponding messengers from sister associations, whereupon came forward from Mt. Moriah to-wit: Elder Woods Springfield and Joe E. Woods, bearing a letter of correspondence from the above named association, and the brethren were received and the moderator extended the right hand of welcome and they were accorded seats with us to aid in counsel in the business of the association.

2. Invited visiting ministers to seats with us. None were present.

3. A motion was made and carried to empower the moderator to appoint all committees, whereupon the following committees were appointed, to-wit:

4. Committee on Arrangement—A. J. Hays, W. I. Maddox and G. C. Crews, with the deacons of Mt. Harmony church.

5. Committee on Documents and Order of Business—W. R. Cowley, T. M. Loller, G. B. Taylor, J. A. Brown and J. A. Isbell, with the moderator and clerk.

6. Committee on Temperance—W. N. McCluskey, W. B. Harris, A. J. Motes, C. C. Gibbs, J. H. Franks, G. H. Dyer and I. P. Robertson.

7. Committee on Finance—T. G. Gilliland, W. D. Hollis and D. W. Dill.

8. Committee on Deceased Members—D. G. W. Hollis, Joe McNeese, J. L. Beasely, M. P. Turner, J. R. Pennington, Branson Hollis and R. N. Yearby.

9. Committee on Sabbath Schools—S. P. Brown, M. N. Shelworth, R. T. Green, J. B. Bradford, R. G. Pennington, J. W. Adams and G. W. Baker.

10. Committee on Credentials—H. Cox, W. W. Barnes, W. M. Brown, J. M. Johnson, J. R. Cole and T. L. Hays.

11. Committee on Queries—J. M. Ayers, J. N. Reeder, Roman Mason, B. F. Cline, M. D. McGee, J. R. Robertson, D. G. W. Hollis.

12. The committee on arrangements begged leave to submit the following report on devotional exercises for Sunday, as follows: At 9 o'clock, Rev. D. G. W. Hollis; 11 o'clock, Rev. Woods Springfield; at night, Rev. J. W. Porter.

13. The business of the day being ended, a motion was made and carried to adjourn until Monday morning at 8 o'clock. Then a hymn was sung and prayer was offered by

Rev. G. B. Taylor, after which the benediction was pronounced.

### SUNDAY SERVICES.

On Sunday morning at 9 o'clock there had gathered a large concourse of people, and Rev. D. G. W. Hollis filled the stand and addressed a large and attentive congregation. His text was Ephesians 2:8.

By the hour of 11 o'clock there had gathered such a large congregation that it was deemed best to move the seats to the grove, and Rev. Woods Springfield filled the stand and preached to a very large congregation. His text was Solomon 6:10. After the sermon the Lord's Supper was administered to a host of Christians. The congregation was then dismissed.

Sunday night Rev. J. W. Porter preached to a large congregation from the text Ephesians 1:11, followed by Rev. D. G. W. Hollis. The congregation was then dismissed.

### MONDAY—MORNING SESSION.

The association met pursuant to adjournment. The congregation sung a hymn, after which Rev. J. A. Isbell led in prayer. The clerk called the roll of delegates, and a quorum being present, the moderator called for the regular order of business.

1. Invited visiting ministers of other denominations to seats with us. None present.

2. On motion, omitted the reading of the minutes of Saturday's session.

3. Called for reports from various committees.

#### COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTS AND ORDER OF BUSINESS.

We, your committee on documents and order of business, beg leave to submit the following report: We recommend the former order of business, with the exception of inviting visiting ministers of other denominations to seats with us in aid of counsel.

We recommend that the next session of this association be held with Pearce's Chapel church.

We furthermore recommend that the clerk superintend the printing of the minutes of this association, and that he

have it done where he can get it done best and cheapest, and that he be allowed all the money over and above the cost of the printing and distributing of the above work for his services.

We recommend one Union Meeting to be held with Union Chapel church, to convene on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1904.

We recommend that each minister of this association make an annual report of his ministerial work done during the association year.

We recommend to the association for its consideration the purchasing of a printing press for the benefit of the Freewill Baptist Church, South. Respectfully submitted,  
W. R. COWLEY, Chairman.

The report was received and the committee discharged. Then a motion was made to adopt the report by sections. Then the report was read and adopted as read.

We, the Vernon Association of the Freewill Baptist church, in session at Mt. Harmony church, Lamar county, Alabama, October 17, 18, 19, 1903, have called a convention and do cordially invite our sister associations of Alabama and elsewhere to meet, with delegates who can be elected at the Union meetings, for the purpose of forming some plan by which we can raise means to purchase and put in operation a printing press to be owned and controlled by those who will take shares in the same. Place of meeting, Mt. Willing church, Fayette county, Alabama, Friday, before the first Sunday in September, 1904, five miles south of Guin, Ala.

#### COMMITTEE ON DECEASED MEMBERS.

We, your committee on deceased members, beg leave to submit the following report: As the result of our investigations we find that our Heavenly Father has summoned thirteen of our faithful co-laborers in Christ to their eternal home during this associational year. We have lost the following named members, to-wit: Elder T. W. Springfield, one of the original members of the Vernon Freewill Baptist Association; Elder J. R. Baker, and Sisters Mary Taylor and Annie Crowder, of Springfield church; Brother J. A. Taylor and Sister M. I. Lee, of Mt. Willing church; Brother T. Cox, of New Mt. Pleasant church; Brother Bluford Cash and Sister Dora Weathers, of Mt. Zion; Sister Sarah Sims,

of Mt. Harmony; Sister Lucreacy Stacy, of Mt. Pleasant, and Brothers B. F. Gibson, Jr., and G. L. Gore, of Friendship. All of the above named members died in the triumph of a living faith and eternal happiness, and we bow in humble submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well; and, dear brethren, as the Lord has summoned the above named of our colaborers in Christ, our labors are increased; so let us strive to accomplish the work once assigned to these, our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, and while we mourn their loss, we feel that our loss in their death is their eternal gain. So let the various churches of the association contribute to the widows and orphans of their respective churches who are in destitute conditions.

We pay this, our last tribute of respect, in memory to our deceased brothers and sisters, and shall endeavor to meekly say our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done by the angels in Heaven. Respectfully submitted,

D. G. W. HOLLIS, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged. Then the report was adopted as read.

#### COMMITTEE ON SABBATH SCHOOLS.

We, your committee on Sabbath schools, beg leave to submit the following report: After making an investigation of the Sabbath school interests, we find no improvement in the Sabbath schools throughout the entire association. Dear brethren, knowing that the hope of our State and church depends upon the young, rising generation, therefore we should be interested in training the minds of the young and rising generation, and as we know the State and church is based on the Bible, it is our duty to educate the minds of our children on the fundamental law, which is the Bible; and as we know an education is easier obtained in school than anywhere else, we should rally to erect Sabbath schools in all of our churches, that the minds of the young and rising generation may better be prepared for usefulness than we are in our times, and, feeling our responsibility to God for the rearing of our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, we recommend the Bible as our own literature to be used in our Sabbath schools. So let us rally to the Sabbath school cause. Respectfully submitted,

S. P. BROWN, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged. Then the report was adopted as read.

#### COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

We, your committee on credentials, beg leave to submit the following report: After a careful investigation of all of our ministers, we find them all in good standing in their respective churches, except Brother W. T. Evans, a licentiate minister. We find he is preaching and advocating the so-called modern sanctified doctrine. We hereby recommend that his name be dropped from the roll of ministers. All the rest are standing by and preaching free salvation strictly, and are advancing our cause so far as their circumstances will admit. Respectfully submitted;

M. M. PICKLE, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged. Then the report was adopted as read, Brother W. T. Evans' name being dropped from the list of ministers' names.

#### COMMITTEE ON TEMPERANCE.

We, your committee on temperance, beg leave to submit the following report: Investigations disclose the fact that we find the temperance cause on the decrease. Therefore, we urge the earnest co-operation of both ministers and lay members to ever urge the decrease of intemperance. Brethren, be earnest in the matter; let not the mere adoption of this report suffice, but every member of this association should exert their influence in behalf of this grand cause. Respectfully submitted,

W. N. M'CLUSKY, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged. Then the report was adopted as read.

#### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.

We, your committee on finance, beg leave to submit the following report: We have collected \$19.50 for the purpose of printing and distributing the minutes to the different churches of the association. Respectfully submitted,

T. G. GILLILAND, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged. Then the report was adopted as read.

Then a motion was made and carried to turn the money over to the clerk.

#### COMMITTEE ON QUERIES AND RESOLUTIONS.

We, your committee on queries and resolutions, beg leave to submit the following report: First query—Brethren, is

it right, according to the Scriptures, for the moderator of our faith and order to refuse to commune with his Lord by partaking of bread and wine in the body he presides over? Respectfully submitted, JOHN M. AYRES, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged. Then the report was adopted as read.

By motion, the query was then taken up and discussed.

There was a motion made and carried to adjourn one hour for recreation and refreshment.

Adjourned.

### MONDAY—AFTERNOON SESSION.

The body met pursuant to adjournment. The query was then taken up again. By motion the query was put before the association to take a vote as a body of the whole, and by majority of the body voting, said it was not right for a moderator to do so.

Then there was a motion made and carried to empower the moderator to appoint all messengers to sister associations, whereupon the following named brethren were appointed to the different associations, to-wit: Mt. Moriah association, D. G. W. Hollis, G. B. Taylor, M. D. McGee and John M. Ayres; to the Jasper association, C. A. Choffin, J. A. Brown, G. C. Crews and W. N. McClusky; to the Tupelo association, W. R. Cowley, G. H. Dyer and T. G. Gilliland; to the Bear Creek association, J. A. Isbell, J. H. Franks and C. C. Gibbs.

4. The moderator called for motions and resolutions, whereupon the committee on resolutions offered the following:

Be it resolved, That our thanks are due and are hereby tendered to the members of Mt. Harmony church and the citizens of this vicinity, and more especially to the sisters, for their kindness and hospitality shown us during our stay among them. Respectfully submitted,

JOHN M. AYRES, Chairman.

Be it resolved, That the amount of money which is paid to each preacher as pastor be sent up to the association and be appended to the minutes. Respectfully submitted,

JOHN M. AYRES, Chairman.

Be it resolved, That the proceedings of the last Union meeting be appended to our next minutes. Respectfully submitted,

JOHN M. AYRES, Chairman.

5. By motion, the moderator appointed Rev. T. M. Loller to preach the introductory sermon at the next association, with Rev. J. A. Isbell alternate.

6. By motion, the moderator appointed Rev. G. B. Taylor to preach the introductory sermon at the Union meeting, with Rev. M. D. McGee alternate.

The business of the session being finished, there was a motion made and carried to adjourn to meet with Pearce's Chapel church, five miles east of Smithville, Miss., on Saturday before the third Sabbath in October, 1904, after which Rev. J. A. Brown offered prayer.

Then the congregation sang a song and the parting hand was taken amid tears of grief and joy, and shouts were heard from all parts of the house.

REV. J. W. PORTER, Moderator.

J. E. CHAFFIN, Clerk.

REV. D. G. W. HOLLIS, Cor. Sec.

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#### NAMES AND POSTOFFICES OF MINISTERS.

D. G. W. Hollis.	Vernon, Ala.
J. A. Brown.	Hester, Ala.
C. A. Choffin.	Guin, Ala.
M. D. McGee.	Hightog, Ala.
J. R. Robertson.	Hightog, Ala.
G. B. Taylor.	Richards, Ala.
W. R. Thurman.	Tennis, Ala.
J. A. Isbell.	Crews, Ala.
W. R. Cowley.	Smithville, Miss.
J. W. Porter.	Guin, Ala.
I. P. Neighbors.	Kennedy, Ala.
T. M. Loller.	Alfred, Ala.

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## PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SECOND UNION MEETING, HELD WITH SPRINGFIELD CHURCH, AUGUST 8 AND 9, 1903.

The second Union meeting of the Freewill Baptists met at the Springfield church on August 8 and 9, 1903.

Owing to the absence of the moderator, Brother G. B. Taylor was elected moderator pro tem; and J. S. Hollis was elected clerk pro tem. Business proceeded as follows:

Call of the various churches of the association.

First call, Springfield church, which was not represented by letter, but statement was made as to her religious standing and great work in the world for Christ. Her delegates present were H. Hollis, A. L. Pennington and D. W. Pennington.

Union Chapel—Without letter, statement as to condition of church by T. M. Loller. Her representatives present were J. T. Ruseau and T. M. Loller.

New Center Point—No letter or delegates.

Mt. Willing—No letter, but represented by W. M. McClusky and W. M. Crews.

New Pleasant Ridge—Not represented.

Fairview—Not represented.

Unity—Represented by J. L. Beasley, T. L. Hayes and R. C. Stacy.

Mt. Zion—Not represented.

Mt. Harmony—Represented by T. B. Jackson, J. E. Williams and I. Robertson.

Shady Grove—Not represented.

Mt. Pleasant—Represented by J. W. Adair and Thomas Adair.

Piney Grove—Not represented.

Friendship<sup>2</sup>—Represented by W. May and C. Green.

Pearce's Chapel—Not represented.

New Mt. Pleasant—Not represented.

Beaverton—Not represented.

Corinth—Not represented.

Union Ridge—Not represented.

Pleasant Ridge—Not represented.

The next order of business was the election of a permanent moderator and clerk, which resulted in the election of G. B. Taylor for moderator, and J. S. Hollis for clerk.

Called for unfinished business. None.

New business. A committee on preaching was appointed by the moderator, to-wit: Brothers R. C. Stacy, I. Robertson and J. W. Adair.

Appointment of committee on questions for discussion. Committee-appointed were Brothers H. Hollis, T. B. Jackson and T. Hays.

A committee was appointed to draft resolutions to the association, asking that the minutes of the second Union meeting be appended to the minutes of the association. The committee was as follows: T. M. Loller, A. M. Pennington and W. S. Hollis.

The committee on queries reported the following resolution:

Resolved, That we, as a church of Christ, should have a printing press or an official organ, and what is the best way to obtain it? Referred to the association for settlement.

The committee on preaching reported as follows: That T. M. Loller preach Saturday night and J. R. Baker at 9 o'clock on Sunday.

Committee on Union meeting made a report.

A corresponding committee was appointed to correspond with the various churches of the association relative to a printing press, and to report the result to the association, which is to be held with Mt. Harmony church, on the third Sunday in October, 1903. Names of those on the committee are Moses Hollis, Walter Hollis and Joe Pennington.

A resolution was adopted by the Union meeting, which is below appended:

Be it resolved by the members and delegates of the second Union meeting, That the proceedings of the Union meeting be appended to the minutes of the association in full. Done by the second Union meeting, held at Springfield church, August 8 and 9, 1903.

WALTER HOLLIS, Chairman.

Adjourned with respect to the good people of Springfield church, and with the benedictions of Heaven upon the church, that its work may be untiring and that many bright crowns may be the result of its work.

G. B. TAYLOR, Moderator.

J. S. HOLLIS, Clerk.

## CONSTITUTION.

Section. 1. This association shall be known as the Vernon Freewill Baptist Association of Alabama, and being composed of delegates from the different churches forming the same, each church being entitled to three delegates.

Sec. 2. This body shall be considered an advisory council, but having no authority over the affairs of the churches, unless they depart from the articles of faith of this association. In case any church departs from the articles of faith and supports doctrines of heresy, or allows any minister of her body to teach doctrine not in keeping with our articles of faith, the same shall be dealt with by this association as it may see proper according to the teachings of the Bible.

Sec. 3. Each church of this association shall be considered an advisory body and shall control its own internal affairs in matters of discipline, etc., though the association shall rule in matters of doctrine and general interest, though the church may in extreme cases call in aid from sister churches.

Sec. 4. All questions of doctrine and matters of general interest shall be settled by a two-thirds vote of the association, and the decision shall be final.

Sec. 5. The officers of this association shall be a moderator, clerk and treasurer, who shall be chosen at each session by a majority vote.

Sec. 6. This association shall meet annually at such time and place as may be agreed upon by a previous annual session, and shall not adjourn finally until all the business is transacted.

Sec. 7. Churches wishing to become members of this association must adopt its articles of faith and conform to its usages.

Sec. 8. We agree, as churches of this association, to use our best influence to promote the interest of all moral and benevolent institutions; such as the temperance cause, Sabbath schools, missionary work, etc.

Sec. 9. No member of this association shall be eligible to the office of moderator more than two successive sessions, unless no other member is competent to act in that capacity.

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## RULES OF DECORUM.

Rule 1. The association shall be called to order by the moderator who presided at the last session. Former clerk shall also officiate until the body is fully organized.

Rule 2. The association shall be opened and closed with singing and prayer.

Rule 3. The moderator and clerk shall be chosen by ballot at each session of the association. A majority of votes by the delegates present elects.

Rule 4. The names of the delegates from the different churches shall be enrolled and called as often as necessary during the session.

Rule 5. A majority of the delegates present shall rule in all cases, except in the reception of churches into our body; then it must be unanimous.

Rule 6. The moderator shall not be allowed to vote, except in case of a tie, and then he shall give the deciding vote. He shall be entitled to speak on any question after others have spoken, provided he appoints some one to the chair while he is speaking.

Rule 7. Only one person shall speak at the same time, who shall arise and address the moderator.

Rule 8. No brother shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he depart from the subject under discussion, or use words of personal reflection.

Rule 9. No person shall be entitled to speak more than twice on the same subject, without leave from the association, nor more than 15 minutes at a time.

Rule 10. No member shall laugh or talk during the time the debates are going on.

Rule 11. No member shall absent himself from the association without leave from the moderator.

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ARTICLES OF FAITH.

Article 1. We believe there is 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 distinction 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, Truth for its matter, and Salvation for its end; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is and shall remain to the end of this world the center 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 the 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. Jas. 1:5, this is to act saving faith. John 1:9, however, none but those who believe, or acquiesce, in Christ will be saved thereby—Acts 17:32; 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, 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. 11:12-13; Rom. 12:14; Mark 13:12; Eze. 18:24; Rev. 2 and 3 chs.; Eze.

33:13 and 28; 1st Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:5; 1st Cor. 1:12 and 22; 1st Peter 1:10.

Art. 9. We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of believers, associated by covenant in the faith of fellowship of the gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; that its only proper officers are bishops, or pastors, and deacons, whose qualifications 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 the Lord's Supper is of perpetual obligation, by which the members of the church, in the form of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Art. 12. We believe in open and free 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.

Art. 13. 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 the principles of grace and justice.

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## STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE VERNON FREEWILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION FOR 1903.

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