

MINUTES
OF THE
55th Annual Session
OF THE
VERNON
Free Will Baptist
Association

CONVENED WITH
PEARCES CHAPEL CHURCH

OCTOBER 19, 20, 21, 1935

OFFICERS

REV. S. F. LEE-----MODERATOR

L. E. DUNCAN-----CLERK

**The next Session of the Association will Convene
with Mt. Willing Church on Saturday before the
Third Sunday in October, 1936**

Rev. C. A. CHAFFIN to Preach the Introductory Sermon
Rev. S. F. LEE as Alternate

PROCEEDINGS

Of the Vernon Association

The 55th Annual Session of the Vernon Free Will Baptist Association convened with Pearces Chapel Church on October 19th, 1935. The Body assembled at 11:00 a. m. and after a short service of song, Rev. J. L. Lavender brought the introductory message using as a Scripture Psalms 115. Adjournment was then taken for refreshments.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The congregation was called to order in song services conducted by Brothers Calvin Lawrence, J. M. Graham and A. J. Sanders. In the absence of Rev. J. W. Porter our beloved Moderator, Rev. S. F. Lee took charge. A move sustained by a second and carried that Brother Lee act as Moderator Protem until the permanent organization of the body. Brothers J. M. Graham and E. E. Cowart were appointed as reading Clerks and the letters from each church called for in order. Fifteen churches were represented in the Association by letters and delegates. (Delegates names and church statistics will be found in Statistical Table).

Moved and carried that the Body go into permanent organization by electing a Moderator and Clerk, after nominations and the ballot was taken Rev. J. M. Haas was elected Moderator and L. E. Duncan Clerk. Brother A. J. Sanders, the retiring Clerk, then read his report which was received as follows:

Minute funds for 1934	\$27.20
State Conference funds	4.50
Total	\$31.70
Paid for Minutes	\$17.50
State Conference	4.50
Postage for mailing Minutes	1.69
Clerks Fee for having Minutes printed	5.00
Total	\$28.69
Balance	\$3.01

A. J. Sanders, Clerk.

Delegates from Corresponding Associations were then welcomed into the body as follows:

Water Valley, Brothers G. C. Lee, D. M. Smitherman and J. H. Norwood. Jasper, J. S. Frederick, J. H. Potts, J. F. Ashmore and M. L. Hollis. Mt. Moriah, Brother J. E. Tilley. State Line, Brothers C. R. Puckett and C. P. Thompson.

The Moderator and Clerk were then empowered to appoint the various committees.

The Committee on arrangements were appointed as follows: Brothers J. M. Graham, L. B. Hill and S. J. Webster with the Deacons of Pearces Chapel Church and they were asked to bring in a report before adjournment of the Afternoon Session. Rev. M. L. Hollis then assisted in finding homes for the delegates and visitors during the remainder of the session.

The Committee on Arrangements reported as follows:

Rev. J. F. Ashmore to preach Saturday evening at 7:00 o'clock.

Rev. D. M. Smitherman at 9:00 Sunday Morning.

Rev. J. E. Tilley at 11:00 Sunday Morning.

Rev. J. S. Frederick at 7:00 Sunday Evening.

Rev. George C. Lee Monday, time not given.

Owing to the time required to appoint the various committees it was decided best to have the appointments read at the evening service.

Moved and carried that the business of the Association be adjourned until 8:00 a. m. Monday.

EVENING SERVICE

Reading of Committee appointments as follows:

Documents and Order of Business—Brothers A. J. Sanders, S. F. Lee, J. S. Johnson, M. C. Johnson and Phillips Woods with the Moderator and Clerk.

Finance—Brothers Sanders Woods, W. J. Hill, Calvin Lawrence, Green Perkins and H. E. McDonald.

Sunday School—Hollis Francis, D. C. Hall, J. F. Maddox, H. J. Rye and James Trentham.

Credentials—R. J. Sanders, E. W. Perkins, J. A. Robertson, G. A. Weir and C. C. Phillips.

Deceased Members—George Robinson, S. G. Johnson, C. C. McKee, Amos Roberts and Ross Gunnels.

Literature—Milner Johnson, J. S. Frederick, Mike Vail, A. J. McDonald, J. R. Williams and Addie Barnes.

Queries and Resolutions—J. L. Lavender, M. F. Mattison, T. R. Maddox, D. Langley and Miss Boyce Fuller.

Missions—Sisters S. O. Johnson, Beatrice Lee, Mary Barnes, Lillie Roberts, Annie Graham and Brother Alva Tucker.

Temperance—J. T. Alexander, J. H. Norwood, Ida Alexander and Marie Haas.

Brother J. F. Ashmore read as a Scripture lesson Matthew 24 25-39 and used as a Text Matthew 7:21 which he handled in a very able manner.

SUNDAY SERVICES

A large congregation gathered early Sunday morning for the preaching services. Rev. D. M. Smitherman preached from Genesis 1:1 for a short time after which Rev. J. H. Potts, at Brother Smitherman's request, spoke for the remainder of the hour's service. A short recess was then given. The congregation came together in a song service which every one seemed to enjoy for the soul inspiring old hymns bring us closer to our Savior. Rev. J. E. Tilley preached an able sermon at the eleven o'clock hour, using as a Text a portion of the 5th and twelfth verses of the 21st Chapter of St. John. After a short talk by the Moderator adjournment was taken for refreshments.

The afternoon service consisted entirely in singing Praises to His great and Matchless Name, and when the time came to close everyone seemed to feel that God had been glorified and their lives made happier by mingling their voices in such sweet hymns of praise.

At 6:30 the League of Pearces Chapel Church gave an interesting program on "Home". Rev. J. S. Frederick delivered a very able discourse using as a Text, Romans 1: 20.

During the day an opportunity was given to those who wished to contribute to the Support of our ministers who have come to their reclining years and are not able to spread the Gospel of a Crucified Savior any longer. The contribution amounted to \$29.00 and was divided between Reverends J. W. Porter and Dan Hollis.

MONDAY MORNING SESSION

Rev. M. R. Allen read as a Scripture the First Psalm after which Sister Mary Barnes conducted the opening prayer.

Roll call was taken and a quorum found present. The Moderator then announced the Body read for business. Moved and carried that minutes of Saturday's session be omitted. Moderator read the rules of Decorum, after which report of Committees were called in order.

Report of Committee on Documents and Order of Business read, received and committee discharged, after which it was re-read and adopted by sections as follows:

"1st. We recommend that the Order of Business as adopted by this Association and set forth by its rules of Decorum be followed.

"2nd. We recommend that the custom of electing officers of the Association at the beginning of each Session be discontinued, and that they be elected just prior to the close of each Session the same to serve for the ensuing year.

"3rd. We recommend that the Session be held with Mt. Willing Church, located four miles south of Guin, Ala.

"4th. We recommend that the Clerk superintend the printing of the minutes, having 500 copies printed where he can get it done to the best advantage, being allowed Five Dollars for his services.

"5th. We recommend that Rev. C. A. Chaffin preach the introductory sermon at the next Session of the Association and that Rev. S. F. Lee be the Alternate.

"Respectfully submitted,

"A. J. Sanders, Chairman."

Report of Committee on Sunday Schools read, adopted and Committee discharged:

"We, your Committee on Sunday Schools report as follows: We find that eight of the churches report working Sunday Schools. We urge all the churches in our Association to organize and maintain a Sunday School as it is a means of teaching our people concerning the word of God. Our prayer will be that the report of the next Session shows every one of our churches with a Sabbath School.

"Respectfully submitted,

"Hollis Francis, Chairman."

Report of Committee on Credentials read, received and Committee discharged, then re-read and after some discussion adopted as follows:

"We, your Committee on Ministerial Credentials wish to make the following report. We find that all our Ministers are in good standing with their respective churches, that they are sound in the Faith of our Free Will Baptist doctrine and are warning the people of the coming judgment.

"Respectfully submitted,

"R. J. Sanders, Chairman."

Committee's report on Christian Literature read, Committee discharged, then re-read and adopted by sections as follows:

"1st. We recommend that all the Churches of our Association use any good Christian Hymnal that the Church desires.

"2nd. We recommend that all the Churches use our Denominational literature in their Sunday Schools and Leagues printed at Ayden, N. C.

"3rd. We recommend that all our people make a careful and Spiritual study of the Holy Bible.

"4th. We request that all parents guard against unwholesome literature within their homes.

"Respectfully submitted,

"A. F. Barnes, Chairman."

Report on Queries and Resolutions read, received and Committee discharged. The Query as shown in report was very ably discussed by the following Brothers J. H. Potts, J. F. Ashmore, S. F. Lee, J. S. Fredrick, J. H. Norwood, A. J. Sanders and J. E. Tilley.

Report:

1st. We would like to have this query discussed, "Can a man commit the unpardonable sin before he is converted? If so, in what way?"

2nd. We recommend that all our churches use unleavened bread and the pure fruit of the vine, and use no substitutes at any time in the communion service.

3rd. Be it resolved, that we, the Free Will Baptist of the Vernon Association tender to Pearces Chapel Church and Community our sincere thanks for their kindness and hospitality shown us during our stay among them.

Respectfully submitted,

"J. L. Lavender, Chairman."

Moved and carried that the Business Session adjourn until after preaching and lunch. A short recess was taken, after which Rev. George Lee preached a forceful sermon using as a Text Exodus 12:13.

Recessed for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The Association was called to order by a song service conducted by Mrs. J. H. Potts, then proceeded with the business at hand.

Report of Committee on Temperance read, received and committee discharged, after a short discussion it was deemed best to have the clerk re-write it in part. Adopted as follows:

"We, your Committee on Temperance, submit the following report:

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1. Within the pages of Holy Writ we are taught that the wise abstain from intemperance, so it behooves each of us to adhere strictly to the laws of temperance. May we as a Christian Denomination and as individuals do everything within our power to promote prohibition within our communities, states and nation.

"J. T. Alexander, Chairman."

Committee's report on Deceased Members read, adopted and Committee discharged.

"After a prayerful investigation, we find that God in His Infinite Wisdom, has seen fit to call from the walks of men the following named brothers and sisters of our Association, we feel that our loss is Heaven's gain: Friendship, Mrs. Claude Gore. Damascus, Bros. P. W. Johnson and Eugene Griffin. Beaverton, Bro. M. C. Lockheart. Mt. Harmony, Bro. Leonard Parker. Liberty, Bros. T. G. Harrison, S. F. Dubose, Leslie Perkins and Sisters Sara Yearby, S. F. Dubose and Daisy Guyton. Piney Grove, Sisters M. J. Motes and Moletia Roberts, and Bro Joe Neal. Siloam, Sister Catherine Rye age 92. Springfield, Sisters Willie Mae Boover and Elmira Gaught.

"Respectfully submitted,

"George Robinson, Chairman."

Report on Committee on Missions, read, received and adopted as follows:

"We recommend that our people make a special effort to further the Gospel and all Christian work in their own and nearby communities, we believe by so doing we will be fulfilling the greatest Mission work of the present day. To these ends we hope that all will work for the Glory of God and the Salvation of lost men and women and we feel that each will endeavor to do so the Heavenly Father directs in the Mission field.

"Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Finance report read, received and Committee discharged:

Minute Funds collected	\$28.40
State Conference	1.00
Balance from past year	3.01
Total	\$32.41

"Respectfully submitted,

"Sanders Woods, Chairman."

Moved and carried that Moderator Haas appoint delegates to Corresponding Associations and State Conferences, same appointed as follows:

Jasper Association, Bros. S. F. Lee, E. E. Cowart and D. Hollis.

Mt. Moriah Association, Bros. J. L. Lavender, L. E. Duncan and J. M. Graham.

State Line Association, Bros. M. R. Allen, A. J. Wilson and S. L. Cowley.

State Conference, Bros. W. J. Hill, Addie Barnes and J. M. Graham.

The Moderator then asked if there was any new business to come before the Body. New Macedonia and Beech Springs asked for Letters of Dismissal from the Association, same being granted.

Under the new ruling that officers be elected at the close of the Session it was moved and carried that the Body go into the election of officers to serve for the ensuing year, Rev. S. F. Lee being elected Moderator and L. E. Duncan clerk.

After short talks by several of the visiting ministers and delegates, the farewell song and handclasp was taken and thus closed one of the best sessions of the Vernon Free Will Baptist Association.

CHURCHES	Pastors	DELEGATES	Clerks	Postoffices	RECEIVED BY BAPTISM	RECEIVED BY LETTER	RECOMMENDATION	RESTORED	DISCHARGED BY LETTER	DECEASED	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	MINUTE FUNDS	STATE CONFERENCE FUND	VALUE CHURCH PROPERTY	PAID PASTOR PAST YEAR
Beaverton	J. H. Potts	Beatrice Lee, Mary Barnes, J. Trentham	Beatrice Lee	Beaverton, Ala.	5		6			1	47	1.40		500.00	\$ 48.00
Beeck Springs	J. M. Haas	W. J. Hill, L. B. Hill, C. C. Phillips	M. C. Stenbridge	Tupelo, Miss.	6	2	4			1	80	2.00		1,500.00	54.00
Damascus	M. L. Hollis	S. O. Johnson M. C. Johnson, C. C. McKee	Mrs. E. M. Pace	Dekalo Miss. R.	3					2	32	1.00			80.00
Fairview	C. R. Puckett	A. Roberts, Lillie Roberts, A. Tucker	J. R. Hill	Beaverton, Ala.	2	1			1		44	1.50			
Friendship	J. E. Tilley	G. A. Weir, J. A. Robertson, Annie Graham	J. A. Robertson	Steens, Ala.	1		1		2	1		2.25			62.36
Liberty	M. L. Hollis	G. Perkins, E. W. Perkins, C. Lawrence	R. T. Mixon	Vernon, Ala., R. 2	6	3			1	6	153	2.00			75.55
Mt. Harmony	M. L. Hollis	M. Johnson, S. G. Johnson, A. Barnes	A. A. Prater	Milport, Ala.	10	1			1	1	162	2.00		3,000.00	100.00
Mt. Pleasant	J. S. Frederick	R. J. Sanders M. F. Mattison, Mike Vail	J. G. Adair	Caledonia, Miss.							73	2.50			48.06
Mt. Willing	A. L. Warren	H. E. and A. J. McDonald, S. J. Webster	S. J. Webster	Winfield, Ala.	13	9					209	2.00			
New Macedonia	W. M. Guinn	J. T. and Ida Alexander, Marie Haas	E. Alexander	Tupelo, Miss.	2	7			2			2.00			51.00
Pearces Chapel	M. L. Hollis	J. S. Johnson, H. Francis, G. Robinson	E. E. Cowart	Smithville, Miss.	21	4					293	2.00		2,000.00	128.40
Piney Grove	S. F. Lee	J. R. Williams, S. Woods, Miss B. Fuller	J. R. Williams	Guin, Ala.	6	6				3	96	1.70			
Springfield	J. S. Frederick	R. Gunnels D. Langley, D. C. Hall	Kelcy Jordan	Vernon, Ala.	38	2		6		2	231	2.40			76.40
Siloam	J. B. Watts	H. J. Rye	H. J. Rye							1	63	2.00			
Union Chapel	J. S. Frederick	J. F. and T. R. Maddox, Phillips Woods	Hettie Maddox	Covin, Ala.	2		3	1	2		78	1.75	1.00		95.00
Totals					115	35	14	7	9	18	1566	28.40	1.00	7,000.00	818.77

MINISTERS OF VERNON ASSOCIATION AND ADDRESSES

C. A. Chaffin ----- Winfield, Ala.
 J. W. Porter ----- Winfield, Ala.
 S. F. Lee ----- Guin, Ala.
 T. M. Lollar ----- Covin, Ala.
 S. M. Perkins ----- Vernon, Ala.
 E. A. Palmer ----- Hamilton, Miss.
 J. L. Lavender ----- Steens, Miss.
 J. M. Haas ----- Tupelo, Miss.
 M. R. Allen ----- Smithville, Miss.

VISITING MINISTERS AND ADDRESSES

J. F. Ashmore ----- Winfield, Ala.
 J. E. Tilley ----- Ethelville, Ala.
 D. M. Smitherman ----- Toccopola, Miss.
 J. H. Norwood ----- Toccopola, Miss.
 G. C. Lee ----- Calhoun City, Miss.
 J. H. Potts ----- Beaverton, Ala.
 J. S. Frederick ----- Fayette, Ala.
 C. R. Puckett ----- Fayette, Ala.
 M. L. Hollis ----- Tupelo, Miss.

Program for Holding Association

1. The Association shall be called to order and presided over by the officers elected at the close of the last session.
2. The Association shall be opened and closed with singing and prayer.
3. The Moderator and Clerk shall be chosen by ballot just prior to the close of each session of the Association, by a majority vote of the delegates present.
4. The names of delegates from different churches shall be enrolled and called as often as necessary during the session.
5. A majority of the delegates shall rule in all cases, except in the reception of churches, then it shall be unanimous.
6. The Moderator shall not be entitled to vote, except in case of a tie and then he shall cast 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.
7. Only one person shall speak at a time and he shall rise and address the Moderator and after recognition by the Moderator shall proceed.
8. No brother shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he depart from the subject under discussion or use words of personal reflection.
9. No person shall be allowed to speak more than twice on the same subject without the authority of the Association more than fifteen minutes.
10. No member shall laugh or talk during discussions.
11. No person shall absent himself from the Association without permission of the Moderator.

CONSTITUTION

1. The Association shall be known as the Vernon Free Will Baptist Association of Alabama, being composed of ministers, deacons and delegates from the different churches forming the same. All having full power to vote on all questions which come before the Association. Each church being entitled to three delegates in addition to ministers and deacons.
2. This Body shall be considered an advisory council, but having no authority over the internal affairs of the churches unless they depart from the Articles of Faith of this Association. This Association shall have authority over all ministers in the matter of doctrine, character, and etc. In case any minister in this Association depart from and teach doctrine not in keeping with the Articles of Faith of this Association, the same shall be dealt with by the Association as it may seem proper, according to the teachings of the Bible.
3. Each church of this Association shall be considered an advisory body and shall control its own internal affairs in matters of discipline, and etc. If any Brother feels impressed to preach the Gospel the church shall, or may recommend such a Brother to the Association and upon examination of the Brother's qualifications, if in the judgment of the Body, the Brother would be useful, they shall confer ordination, same being done at the Association by a legal Presbytery.
4. All questions of doctrine and general interest shall be settled by a majority vote of the Association, and the decision shall be final.

5. The officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer, who shall be chosen at each session by a majority vote.

6. The Association shall meet annually at such time and place as may be agreed upon at the previous session and shall not adjourn finally until all business matters are transacted.

7. Churches wishing to become members of this Association must adopt its Articles of Faith and conform to its usages.

8. We agree as church of this Association to use our best influence to promote the interest of all moral and benevolent institutions, such as temperance cause, Sabbath Schools, Missionary work, etc.

9. No member of the Association shall be eligible to serve as Moderator for more than two consecutive sessions unless no other member be competent to act in that capacity.

10. Any member of this Association who shall be guilty of circulating reports of any nature or aiding in the circulating of any report that is untrue on a brother minister, that is calculated to injure his moral reputation and religious influence, the same shall be dealt with by this Association. Any minister of this Association who is known to be guilty of using intoxicating spirits by drinking as a beverage, which is calculated to destroy his influence and usefulness, the same shall be dealt with by this Association as it may deem proper, according to the teachings of the Bible.

11. The Association shall in all cases in the transaction of all business brought before it, be governed by a majority of all delegates present, and any church or delegates failing or refusing to do so is and shall be considered by the Association as being out of order. Each member is to be a party to the enforcement of same.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. We believe there is one true and living God who is the ruler of Heaven and earth, self-existent Creator of all things, revealed under 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.

2. We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is a treasure of Heavenly instructions; that it has God for its author, truth for its matter and salvation for its end; that it reveals principles upon which God will judge us and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the world the center of Christians Union, the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions will be tried.

3. We believe that man was created holy, under the law of his Maker, but from voluntary transgressions, fell from that holy state; in consequence of which all mankind is now deprived and unable of his own free will and ability to recover from the fallen state which he is in by nature.

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.

5. We believe that Christ by His death and suffering made an atonement for the sins of mankind in general and every individual in particular who believes in Him can partake of the Divine benefit.

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

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 requirement of the law of liberty (James 1:5), this the Act-saving Faith (John 1:9). However, none but those who believe in Christ will be saved thereby (Acts 17:32; Romans 2:19; John 3:9).

8. We believe in the free moral agency of man, by the grace of God, before and after conversion; that he is 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; Romans 13:14; Mark 13:12; Ezekiel 18:24; Rev. 2nd and 8th chapters; Ezek. 33:13-28; I Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:5; Cor. 1:12-24; I Peter 1:10).

9. We believe the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of believers, associated by covenant in the fellowship of the Gospel observing the ordinance of Christ, governed by His law and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its only proper officers are bishops, pastors and deacons whose qualifications and duties are defined in the epistles of Timothy and Titus.

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

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

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

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

14. Concerning the washing of the Saint's feet as a Gospel ordinance, each member shall have the right to participate in such ordinance, as he can best answer his own conscience to God, without criticism on the part of anyone.