

MINUTES

OF THE

SIXTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

Vernon Free Will

BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

HELD WITH

SPRINGFIELD CHURCH

OCTOBER 18, 19, 20, 1941

OFFICERS

E. W. Graves ----- Moderator

D. G. Jordan ----- Clerk

The next session of this Association will meet with Belk Church, Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1942. Rev. M. E. Carpenter to preach the Introductory Sermon. Rev. E. W. Graves, alternate.

PROCEEDINGS

The 61st annual session of the Vernon Free Will Baptist Association met at Springfield Church, on October 18, 19 and 20, 1941.

Services were opened with song and prayer, Bro. C. A. Chaffin being absent, Rev. J. S. Fredrich preached the introductory sermon, using St. John 15:14.

After the sermon the congregation stood and sang a song and were dismissed for dinner.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

1. Song by choir, directed by Rev. M. E. Carpenter, prayer by Rev. I. K. Boyette.

2. The former moderator and clerk being absent, Bro. S. F. Lee acted as moderator and appointed D. G. Jordan as clerk protem until the body was permanently organized.

3. The Moderator appointed Rev. E. W. Graves and Bro. Harvey Yerby as reading clerk to read the letters from the various churches.

4. Letters of the various churches were called for and read as noted in Statistical Table.

5. Called for petitionary letters upon which Depriest Free Will Baptist and Vernon Free Will Baptist churches came with letters asking admission into the Vernon Free Will Baptist Association, after which a move was made and carried to receive the letters and seat the delegates from those churches.

6. Moved and carried to elect officers, which were as follows: Moderator, E. W. Graves; Assistant Moderator, J. S. Fredrich; Clerk, D. G. Jordan.

After some remarks by the Moderator for the honors conferred upon him, he proceeded to appoint the devotional committee which was: Rollie Maddox, I. B. Robertson and Hosie Dubose with the Deacons of Springfield church.

7. Called for corresponding delegates. The following came forward and were welcomed by the moderator and clerk. Bro. Mike Vails, Bro. J. T. Baxter, Rev. J. M. Haas, North East Mississippi Association; Bro. and Sister J. M. Stokes, Rev. J. L. Lavender, Mt. Marriah Association; Rev. Grady Hudson, Jasper Association; Rev. I. K. Boyette, State Line Association; Bro. J. H. Cole, Progressive Association.

8. Moved and carried that the moderator appoint all committees which he did as follows: Document and order of business—M. E. Carpenter, J. S. Fredrich, S. F. Lee, W. M. Fields, V. C. May.

Deceased members—Mrs. Kate Williams, Lillie Belle Roberts, Adell Green, Willie Dee Cargile, Hattie Lee Johnson.

Sabbath Schools—Carl Wheeler, Thomas S. Lollar, Loree Butler, Addie Dubose, Idell Wilson.

Temperance—Pearlie May Wallace, Christena Crowder, J. M. Chaffin, Arthur Dowdle, Virgie Crawford.

Literature—Mrs. G. W. Chaffin, Gary Springfield, Mrs. Harvey Yerby, Drucilla Hall, Hazel Pogue.

Querries and Resolution—Harvy Clearman, Dennis Langley, R. L. Earnes, G. G. Chaffin, Claud Fuller.

Credentials—E. O. Shelnut, Banks Benson, Rollie Maddox.

Finance—Hosea Dubose, Willie Hall, Clarence Atkins.

Missions—Edgar Randolph, Covin Finch, C. A. Poore, Kelly Pogue.

Due to an all night singing at Vernon, Saturday night services were omitted.

SUNDAY MORNING

Sunday at 9:30 o'clock Rev. J. L. Lavender preached to a large congregation from Revelations 14:1-13. Text, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

At 11:00 o'clock Rev. J. M. Haas preached a great message to an attentive congregation from St. Luke 18:24 and Gen. 43:16.

SUNDAY EVENING

At 2:00 o'clock Rev. A. J. Lambert preached from St. Mat. 16:13.

SUNDAY NIGHT

At 7:30 o'clock Rev. I. K. Boyette preached a great message on the question of communion and feet washing after which the communion and feet were commemerated.

MONDAY SESSION

The Association met with singing after which Rev. George Vaughn made a short talk and offered prayer.

The Association was called to order. The clerk called the roll of delegates and the moderator declared a quorum present, after which a move was made and carried to substitute for delegates that were absent, which were as follows: Lela Prater and Lizzi Glasgow.

After the moderator had read the rules of the Association Rev. S. F. Lee made some remarks in regard to standing by our officers of the Association, after which a welcome was extended to visiting brethern.

A move was made and carried to omit the reading of the minutes of Saturday's proceedings.

The Moderator called for the reports of the committees.

REPORT ON DOCUMENT AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

We, your Committee on Document and Order of Business wish to make the following report.

1. We recommend the regular Order of Business.
2. We recommend that this Association go to Belk in 1942. We also recommend that this delegate body determine this place or any other to be considered.
3. We recommend that the General Business Committee be empowered by the delegate body of this Association to determine the place of the meeting of this Vernon Association each year hereafter.
4. We recommend that the 3rd clause of General Business Committees report of 1940 be repealed.
5. We recommend that M. E. Carpenter preach the introductory sermon in 1942 and that Rev. E. W. Graves be alternate.
6. We recommend that we hold a business meeting composed of all Ministers, Deacons and Clerks of this Association to be held with Vernon church on Thursday and Friday before the 3rd Sunday in November.
7. We recommend that the Clerk of this Association superintend the printing of the minutes and that 500 copies be printed.
8. We recommend that Article No. 7 of 1940's report be retained.
9. We recommend the ordination of the following as Deacons: Bros. S. Y. Shelton, Harvy Clearman of Union Chapel and Bros.

Charlie Hollis, Tom Cox, Albert Williams of Depriest church.

10. We recommend that the Moderator with Bros. M. L. Hollis and I. K. Boyette serve as ordaining council.

11. We recommend that this Association appoint a program committee to serve throughout each Associational year that program of said Association be gotten out in ample time to notify each participant on said program.

Respectfully submitted,

M. E. Carpenter, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report re-read by sections and adopted as read.

Moved and carried to seat Rev. M. L. Hollis as representative from East Mississippi Association.

REPORT ON DECEASED MEMBERS

After a prayerful investigation we find that God in His divine wisdom, saw fit to call from our midst the following. While we realize this to be a great loss to their fellowman. We also realize their going is Heaven's gain. We extend heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved.

Springfield—Hershel Hollis, A. L. Pennington, Mattie Cunningham.

Fairview—Rev. E. A. Palmer.

Union Chapel—Sister James A. Collins Hankins.

Mt. William—Sister Louvena Chaffin, Bro. Phillips, Belton Eades.

Liberty—Emmitt Harrison, Julia Barnes, Charlie Taylor.

We recommend that there be memorial services held at each session of this Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Kate Williams, Chairman.

Report received and adopted as read and committee discharged.

REPORT ON SABBATH SCHOOLS

We, the committee on Sabbath Schools beg to report that we have found that ten of the churches in our Association have active Sunday Schools with an average attendance of 535. We find that our Sunday Schools all use the Free Will Baptist Literature. We recommend that all our Pastors encourage the work in each church.

We urge that each Sunday School support the Sunday School Convention which will be held with Union Chapel Church on the 2nd Fifth Sunday in 1942.

Report not signed.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

REPORT ON TEMPERANCE

We, your committee on temperance, after a careful study and examination do believe there is danger confronting us in the move—we recommend that the church of the living God adopt resolutions to curb this evil. We further recommend that we, as members of ment and inactment being put in force throughout our land, and the church of the living God be sober by practicing total abstinence led by the Spirit of our Lord in this matter. Carry the battle on in the Spirit of meekness by example as well as by teaching.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Pearlle Mae Wallace, chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

REPORT ON LITERATURE

We, your committee on literature recommend that our churches and Sunday Schools take the Bible as our guide and use Free Will Baptist Literature.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. G. W. Chaffin, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

QUERRIES AND RESOLUTIONS

We, the committee on Querries and Resolutions beg to report as follows:

1. Has the Spirit of God always been upon earth? What was its mission before the birth of Christ?

2. Resolved that this Association condemn immorality and intemperance among its members.

3. Resolved that this Association extend to the church and community of Springfield a rising vote of thanks and appreciation for the fine hospitality and kindness shown us during our stay among them.

Respectfully submitted,

W. H. Clearman, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

At 11:00 o'clock Rev. M. L. Hollis brought a great message from Solomon 1:1-2. A crushed Heart.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Services opened with singing by Rev. M. E. Carpenter and prayer by Rev. S. F. Lee.

REPORT ON CREDENTIALS

We, your committee on Ministerial Credentials find that our Ministers are in good standing one with another and preaching the Free Will Baptist doctrine.

Humbly submitted,

E. O. Shelnut, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

REPORT ON HOME MISSION

We, the committee on Home Missions wish to report as follows: We find that very little has been done toward this important work. In order that we may stimulate more interest in Home Missions we recommend:

1. That this Association appoint a Minister to have charge of this work, and that he visit each church at least once each year for the purpose of arousing interest in Home Missions.

2. In order that we may have a fund for Home Mission work. We recommend that the 3rd Sunday in April be designated as Home Mission days and that on these days special programs and offering be given in interest of Home Missions, and that any such funds may be raised shall be turned over to the Mission preacher, that he may carry on the work for the year.

3. We recommend that this missionary make a report of his

work and funds that he may receive to this Association. We also recommend that this Mission preacher make a special effort to revive interest at Beaverton and Mt. Pleasant churches.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Clemmie Poore, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

At 2:00 o'clock the Moderator appointed Bros. M. L. Hollis, S. F. Lee and I. K. Boyette as ordaining council which officiated at this time in ordaining the Deacons as recorded in Document and Order of Business report.

FINANCE REPORT

We, your committee on Finance submit the following report. We have collected as minute funds, \$30.61.

Respectfully submitted,

Hosea Dubose, Chairman.

Report received and committee discharged.

Report adopted as read.

Moved and seconded to turn the money over to the Clerk.

A song was sung and a public collection was taken up.

Moved and carried that this Association represent in the State and National Association with \$5.00 funds.

On motion the Moderator appointed the following delegates to the various Associations: Jasper—S. F. Lee, J. E. Chaffin.; Mt. Marriah, J. M. Graham, Carl Wheeler; North East Mississippi, M. E. Carpenter, Lloyd Turner; State Line, C. R. Hollis, Kelly Pogue; Progressive, J. S. Fredrich, E. O. Shelnut; State Association, C. R. Hollis, Harvey Clearman, D. C. Hall; National Association, V. C. May.

A program committee was appointed by the Moderator as follows: V. C. May, Harvey Yerby and S. Y. Shelton.

The business of the Association being completed it was moved and seconded to adjourn to meet with Belk Church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1942.

At the close of the days work Rev. S. F. Lee preached a great memorial message in honor of our dead.

A song was sung and the parting hand shake was had.

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 should 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 appoint someone 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 person 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 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, 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 judgement 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, Missinary work, etc.

9. No member of this 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 circulation 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 transgression, 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 from the force and operation of our own 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 men 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 motify 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 believer, 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 perpatual obligation by which members of the church are to commemorate together, in the form of bread and wine, the dying love of Christ, preceeded 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 judgement; 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.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION MINUTE

The West Alabama Sunday School Convention met with Friendship Church on the 2nd fifth Sunday in 1941.

The body was called together wtih singing and prayer, after which were given some short talks and a lecture on the Sunday School lesson by Rev. M. E. Carpenter.

After a few songs the Moderator called for the various Sunday Schools present with programs, which were as follows: Belk, Mt. Harmony, Friendship, Liberty, Springfield, Sulphur Springs.

Belk rendered an interesting program composed of poems, and good singing by the Kelly children, after a comment by the Moderator, we adjourned for dinner.

AFTERNOON SESSION

In the afternoon we had a grand feast from the programs rendered by Mt. Harmony, Friendship, Liberty, Springfield and Sulphur Springs.

BUSINESS SESSION

A move was made and carried that we have the convention minutes printed in with the Association minutes and that the convention pay its pro rata of the cost of printing according to pages.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Moved and carried to retain the old officers.

The next session will meet with Union Chapel on the second fifth Sunday in 1942.

MINUTE FUNDS

On Hand -----	\$17.00
Collected at Con. -----	1.00
Total -----	\$18.00
F. W. Graves -----	Moderator
D. G. Jordan -----	Clerk