

MINUTES
OF THE
SEVENTIETH ANNUAL SESSION
OF THE
VERNON FREE WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
HELD WITH
SPRINGFIELD F. W. B. CHURCH

OCTOBER 14, 15, 16, 1950

OFFICERS

Rev. A. L. Warren, Moderator Vernon, Ala.
E. W. Graves, Clerk Vernon, Ala.

The next session of this Association will be held with Fairview church, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1951, Rev. E. W. Graves to preach the Introductory sermon.

Times Print, Fayette, Ala.

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**Of The Seventieth Session
Of The Vernon Free Will Baptist Association**

The Association met at Springfield church promptly at 10 o'clock. Rev. A. J. Lambert led the song service and prayer was offered by Rev. A. G. Lacey.

Rev. Leander McAdams conducted the devotional. Rev. M. H. Hollis prayed. A large number testified with gladness of heart. Rev. M. L. Hollis closed the devotional with his prayer.

Rev. J. T. Adair, our oldest minister in years and service delivered the introductory sermon. He chose for his text, Rom. 12-1. His message was enjoyed by a good congregation.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the noon hour.

SATURDAY P. M.

Bro. Robert Gosa led the song service. Rev. S. F. Lee, the prayer. Rev. A. L. Warren called the house to order and gave the scripture reading. He then delivered the Moderator's address.

Revs. J. V. Collier and J. H. Reeves were appointed reading clerks. Letters were then called for and the following churches responded and listed their delegates.

BELK: Rev. and Sister Robert Collins and Sister Kate Williams.

FAIRVIEW: Bro. Covin Finch, Sister Lilly Belle Roberts and Sister Colley.

FRIENDSHIP: By letter only.

LIBERTY: Bros. Edward Collins, John C. Dubose and Sister Hattie Mixon.

MT. HARMONY: Bro. Carl Wheeler, Homer Robertson and Sister Anna Lou Robertson.

MT. PLEASANT: Bros. J. W. Kemp, Johnnie Banks Barnes and Sister Laura Crossley.

MT. WILLING: Bros. Robert Gosa, Cly May and Sister Robert Gosa.

PINEY GROVE: Bros. Harrison Gosa, Sanders Woods and Alvada Markham.

SPRINGFIELD: Bros. Murray Jordan, Aubry Hall and J. A. Harper.

UNION CHAPEL: Bros. Tommie J. Yerby, R. W. Maddox and F. M. Collins.

VERNON: Bros. Arthur Wilson, Edgar Turner and Lanier Williamson.

TAYLOR SPRINGS: Bros. J. C. Young, Chester Barker and Sister Altha Vinson.

These letters were received and delegates seated. Petitionary letters were called and East Side church of Fayette, delegates, Bro. and sister William Hamm and Jack Price was accepted.

Beaverton church delegates: James E. Cotton, Sister Naomi M. Cotton and James T. Trentham was also accepted.

We were glad to welcome them into our body. The following corresponding delegates were seated: From Jasper Association, Revs. A. J. Lambert, J. H. Reno, N. A. Patterson, J. B. Nelson and A. G. Lacey; Mt. Morriah: Rev. Leander McAdams and J. L. Lavender; State Line: Revs. J. V. Collier and Roy Barnes; North East Mississippi: Revs. M. L. Hollis, M. H. Hollis and Bro. Dee Hollis.

Motion carried to elect officers for the coming year. Rev. A. L.

Warren was retained as Moderator; Rev. S. F. Lee was elected Assistant Moderator; E. W. Graves was retained as Clerk.

Motion carried to empower the Moderator to appoint all committees. The following committees were appointed: On Arrangements—Bro. Sanders Woods, Johnnie Taylor, Emmitt Lee and Arthur Wilson with deacons of Springfield church.

Document and Order of Business—Revs. S. F. Lee, T. J. Adair, W. D. Glasgow, Bro. R. W. Maddox with Moderator and Clerk.

Credential—Bros. D. G. Jordan, Edgar Turner, Odus Robertson, Walter Crossley, Robert Gosa, J. W. Kemp and Tommie J. Yerby.

Sunday Schools—Sisters Kate Williams, Anna Lou Robertson, Lily Belle Roberts, Laura Crosley, Bro. Lanier Williamson and Howard Sorrels.

Literature—Bros. Carl Wheeler, F. M. Collins, Edward Colins, Jack Price, James T. Trentham, Covin Finch and Rev. B. T. Alexander.

Queries and Resolution—Bros. Robert Collins, Homer Robertson, Johnnie B. Barnes, Cly May, James E. Cotton and Alvada Markham.

Finance—Bros. Paschel Yerby, J. A. Harper, Edd Caine Dubose, William Hamm and Harrison Gosa.

On Deceased Members—Sisters Hattie Mixon, Robert Collins, Naomi Cotton and William Hamm.

The business for the day having been completed, delegates and visitors were assigned to homes and the business adjourned to meet at 8 o'clock Monday A. M.

SATURDAY EVENING

After a fine song service and prayer Rev. W. H. Ryland and children gave a report and program. An offering of \$38.72 was given. After this program Rev. J. V. Collier of Hamilton brought a very fine message, using for his subject, The Parable of the Mustard seed.

SUNDAY A. M.

After appropriate devotional services Rev. A. L. Warren delivered a wonderful Memorial message. Text, Ps. 126-6. At 11 o'clock Rev. A. J. Lambert had the honor of conducting the dedication service of the nice new brick building at Springfield. He chose for his text, Gen. 28-17, "This is none other than the house of God and this is the gate to Heavens."

A great crowd really enjoyed the noon hour.

SUNDAY P. M.

At 1:30 a large congregation assembled for a splendid song service. Rev. Gurley Roberts brought a fine message for the afternoon. He had for his subject, "The Great Wedding Supper."

After this message the great congregation was dismissed and all went away happy because of a fine day spent in the service of the Lord.

SUNDAY EVENING

A goodly number assembled at the church where appropriate devotional services were held after which Rev. J. L. Lavender of Columbus delivered a timely message in his usual effective way.

MONDAY A. M.

The body assembled at 8 o'clock. Bro. F. M. Collins led the hymn, "Everybody Will Be Happy Over There." The Moderator read Ps. 1. Rev. B. T. Alexander led the prayer.

Motion carried to omit the reading of Saturday's proceedings.

A recess was declared to allow the committees to make their reports.

Rev. McAdams conducted a fine devotional while the committees worked.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Document and Order o Business, we your committee make the following report. We recommend:

1. The former Order of Business.
2. That Rev. E. W. Graves preach the introductory sermon at the next session and that Rev. A. L. Warren be his alternate.
3. That E. W. Graves be retained as Associational Evangelist for next year.
4. That the next session of the Association meet with Fairview church.
5. That the Eexecutive Committee be retained.
6. That Article 6 of last years report be reinacted.
7. That Article 7 of last year's report be repealed.
8. (a) That a permanent Credential Committee composed of five members be appointed to serve five years. The top name to be replaced each year. Should he be reappointed his name is placed at the bottom of the list.
(b) This committee shall secure the church letters at noon on Saturday, after examination if they are found in order they shall be reommended to the Association for regular procedure.
(c) In case of questionable letters, the committee shall withhold such letters until an investigation is made to determine the proper one to recommend.
(d) It shall also act upon any petitionary letter of any church and advise the Association after this examination it shall return all letters with its report to the Association.
(e) It shall also investigate all Ministers and Deacons belonging to this Association as to their standing with their respective churches. If they find them worthy they report to the body.

Only those favorably reported may received a certificate of good standing.

(f) This committee shall receive all petitionary letters from Ministers desiring to join our Association. And shall examine him personally as to motive, standing, and doctrine, if it deems him worthy he is reported favorably to the body.

(g) In case a Minister who ceases to uphold our doctrine or is conducting himself unworthily as a Minister of God this committee shall have authority to investigate his case, should such a Minister persist in his course or fail to make restitution, the committee may void his credentials and bar him from our pulpits until the next regular Association when they shall report all action taken. The Association only shall have authority to permanently disqualify him.

(h) Three members of the five may act as a whole committee. Should less than three be present at any session the Moderator shall have authority to temporarily appoint enough to constitute a working committee.

Respectfully submitted,
S. F. Lee, Chairman.

The report was received, the committee discharged. The report was adopted by sections.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

We, your committee on Sabbath schools make the following report: We find that all the churches of this Association have Sunday school except one of the new churches. We have an enrollment of 652 which is 100 increase over last year. We believe that all teachers should be christians. We are looking forward to the coming year when we have have a Sunday school in all our churches.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Lou Robertson, Chairman.

LITERATURE

We, your committee on Literature recommend that all the churches use Free Will Baptist Literature published at Ayden, N. C., in our Sunday schools.

Respectfully submitted,
F. M. Collins, Chairman.

QUERIES AND RESOLUTION

We, your committee on Queries and Resolutions submit the following report: Resolved that we extend our thanks to Springfield church and community for their kindness and hospitality to us during our stay among them.

We, your committee ask the preachers as well as the church members visit the sick and to pray with them to help them financially more in the future than in the past.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Collins, Chairman.

MINISTER'S CREDENTIAL

We, your committee on Minister's Credentials wish to make the following report: After a careful and prayerful investigation of all Ministers and Deacons of the Vernon Association we find they are all in good standing with the Association and their respective churches.

Respectfully submitted,
D. G. Jordan, Chairman

DECEASED MEMBERS

We, your committee on deceased members make the following report: God has seen fit to call from our midst 12 members: Mt. Harmony, Bro. Virgil Crawford; Mt. Willing, Sister Mertie Crews; Liberty, Bros. Hosea Dubose and Johnny Yerby; Vernon, Sister Molly Turner, Rev. M. E. Carpenter, Bro. W. T. Motes and Sister Annie Yarbrough; Springfield, Sister Ella Hollis, Bro. J. V. Clearman; Belk, Sister Edna Smith; Friendship, Sister J. A. Robertson.

We feel our loss is Heaven's gain.

Mrs. Lee Mixon, Chairman.
Respectfully submitted,

STATISTICAL TABLE

CHURCHES	PASTORS	CLERKS AND ADDRESS	Members Rec'd	Dismissed	Deceased	Total Members	No. in S. S.	No. in League	Paid Pastors	Pd. Evangelists	Pd. Orphanage	Home Missions	Paid Christian Education	Paid Disabled Preachers	Minute Funds	Value Church Property	Paid For Improvement	Total Paid Out	Licensed Ministers	Ordained Ministers
Belk	M. L. Hollis	R. H. Yerby Covin, Ala., R-1	12	12	1	204	105	50	\$ 414.63	\$125.00		\$ 11.50			\$ 8.00	\$12,500		\$ 561.13		1
Fairview	S. F. Lee Guin, Ala.	Lily B. Roberts Guin, Ala.				57	42		129.19	13.91					5.00	2,000		150.00		
Friendship	Herbert Tilley	Mrs. Floyd Cline Steens, Miss.			1	99	40		180.50						2.00	1,000		200.00		
Liberty	L. V. Collier Hamilton, Ala.	Edd Collins Vernon, Ala.	3		2	209	80	75	527.27	88.79	51.27		67.85		5.00	3,000	\$ 104.45	844.53		1
Mt. Harmony	A. L. Warren	O. C. Robertson Vernon, Ala.			1	225	40		278.00	100.00		10.50			10.00	4,000	200.00	583.00		
Mt. Pleasant	Roy Barnes Vernon, Ala.	Johnny B. Barnes Vernon, Ala.	2	2		75	25		80.16	31.00					5.60	2,000		120.00		1
Mt. Willing	S. F. Lee	Clinton May Guin, Ala.	5	3	1	229	37		192.75	70.00	50.00			33.00	8.00	2,000		387.10		2
Piney Grove	S. F. Lee	J. M. Chaffin Guin, Ala.	2			163	65		108.55	40.50	12.00				8.00	2,500		170.00		2
Springfield	C. R. Puckett	J. A. Harper Vernon, Ala.	5	2	1	285	30	55	275.00	142.15		21.16			10.00	5,500	1,768.00	2,267.53		1
Taylor Springs	Gurley Roberts Guin, Ala.	Jessie Barnes	6			46	14		25.00	11.00		4.50			2.50	1,000		50.00	1	1
Union Chapel	A. L. Warren	F. M. Collins Vernon, Ala.	3	2		115	50		323.50	110.00	116.60	1.50			10.00	6,000	79.25	675.85		1
Vernon	A. L. Warren	Mrs. Earl Robertson	8		4	123	85	40	486.00	100.00	225.65	66.14		14.45	10.00	15,000	110.80	1,238.42		1
Beaverton	B. T. Alexander	Naomi Cotton Beaverton, Ala.													1.76					
East Side	A. G. Lacy	Eva Hamm Fayette, Ala.				15									2.50					
Total			38	21	11	1845	613	220	\$3,020.55	\$832.35	\$455.52	\$115.30	\$67.85	\$47.45	\$88.36	\$56,500	\$2,262.50	\$7,247.56	1	11

Beaverton and East Side Churches shown above are newly organized.

FINANCE

We, your committee on Finance beg leave to report as follows: After collecting the minute funds from the various churches we have sum of \$90.86. A offering of \$12.25 and \$9.00 was given by the Sunday School Rally. Total collected \$112.11.

Respectfully submitted,
Pascal Yerby, Chairman.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Amount received	\$110.50
Paid out for minutes	60.00
Printing Minister's certificates	2.50
Clerk and Moderators fee	20.00
State Association fee	20.00

Total Paid out \$102.50

\$110.50 less \$102.50, \$8.00 in treasury.

All these reports were adopted and the committee discharged.

The committee of Arrangements announced that Rev. S. F. Lee bring the 11 o'clock message. Rev. Barnes led the prayer. Rev. Lee selected Acts 10:33 for his text and delivered a splendid message to an eager congregation. An offering of \$33.71 was given to Bro. J. M. Chaffin to aid him in his illness.

The noon hour was greatly enjoyed.

At 1 o'clock the body was again assembled. Rev. Warren led the prayer. At this time the Moderator appointed Revs. S. F. Lee, J. T. Adair and A. L. Warren as an examining committee to examine the preachers and deacons who were to be ordained. This committee was also named as the ordaining council.

The committee reported favorably the following ministers for ordination: Revs. Robert Colins, Gurley Roberts, O. Z. Jonhson and Frank Collins. It also reported favorably Bros. James E. Cotton and James T. Trenthanm as deacons from Beaverton church.

An impressive service was conducted under the leadership of Rev. Lee, who gave the charge and Rev. Warren led the prayer.

The council was retained to ordain Rev. Frank Collins, who was unable to be present. The congregation gladly gave a warm hand-clasp of encouragement to these fine young preachers.

The clerk was authorized to add their name to the list of ordained ministers.

The Moderator appointed the following names to be the permanent Credential committee: Bros. Harrison Gosa, Covin Finch, Claudus Collins, Olen Markham and Harvey Yerby.

Delegates appointed were as follows: To State Assocation: Bros. Arthur Wilson, W. H. Clearman and Sister E. M. Fields.

To State Line: Revs. B. T. Alexander, W. D. Blasgow and Gurley Roberts.

To The Jasper: Revs. A. L. Warren and O. Z. Johnson.

To Mt. Morriah: Revs. J. T. Adair and Robert Collins.

To Northeast Mississippi: Rev. E. W. Graves and Bro. Odus Robertson.

Motion carried to turn all finance to the clerk to use as directed.
A rising vote of appreciation was given to Springfield church and community for their kindness and hospitality.

Motion carried to adjourn to meet with Fairview church on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1951.

A united prayer for the sick closed another fine Association.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST ALABAMA AUXILIARY

The Auxiliary met with Belk church an April 30, 1950.

The meeting was called to order by song and prayer.

Rev. W. D. Glasgow gave a very interesting introduction on the subject of obedience to God's Will taken from 2nd Tim. 2:19.

The following churches were listed as having programs to render: Vernon, Mt. Harmony, Liberty, Springfield, Union Chapel and Belk.

The Moderator appointed Bros. B. Smith, K. Randolph and J. G. Taylor as judges to determine which church should receive the banner.

After song and prayer Vernon and Mt. Harmony presented programs of great interest to a very attentive congregation.

At 12 o'clock a fine meal was spread in the recreation building of the school.

The Moderator called the group together by song and prayer. The following churches presented programs: Liberty, Springfield, Union Chapel and Belk. This ended the programs for the day. The judges awarded the banner to Liberty.

AUXILIARY REPORT

In the election of officers for next year Bro. R. H. Yerby was elected Moderator; E. W. Graves Assistant Moderator; D. G. Jordan Clerk.

The new Moderator appointed the following delegates to represent us in the Alabama State Convention at Cordova: Mrs. K. L. Jordan to Ladies Aid; Bro. Verdo Dubose to League; Sister A. M. Wallace to Sunday School.

The Clerk was instructed to turn \$9.00 in his possession to the Clerk of the Association to pay for printing.

Liberty was chosen as the next meeting to be held on the 2nd 5th Sunday in 1951.

R. H. Yerby, Moderator
D. G. Jordan, Clerk.

NAMES OF DECEASED MINISTERS

Rev. W. B. Taylor Rev. Tom Butler, Rev. W. R. Truman, Rev. J. R. Robertson, Rev. W. D. McGee, Rev. J. R. Baker, Rev. W. B. Cowley, Rev. A. J. Brown, Rev. S. M. Perkins, Rev. T. G. Harrison, Rev. D. G. W. Hollis, Rev. J. W. Porter, Rev. T. M. Lollar, Rev. C. A. Chaffen, Rev. G. B. Taylor, Rev. J. A. Tate, Rev. E. A. Palmer, Rev. J. A. Isbell, Rev. W. T. Springfield, Rev. M. E. Carpenter.

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PRESENT MINISTERS

REV. S. F. LEE R. 1, Guin, Ala.
REV. B. T. ALEXANDER Guin, Ala.
REV. E. W. GRAVES Vernon, Ala.
REV. W. C. RAYBURN Guin, Ala.
REV. BILLIE GLASGOW Vernon, Ala.

REV. T. J. ADAIR	Vernon, Ala.
REV. J. J. BARNES	R. 1, Beaverton, Ala.
REV. A. L. WARREN	Vernon, Ala.
REV. ROBERT COLLINC	Kennedy, Ala.
REV. O. Z. JOHNSON	Vernon, Ala.
REV. GURLEY ROBERTS	Guin, Ala.
REV. FRANK COLLINS	Guin, Ala.

PROGRAM FOR HOLDING ASSOCIATION

1. The Association shall be called to order and presided over by the officers elected at the last session.
2. The Association shall be opened and closed with singing of the delegates present.
3. The Moderator and Clerk shall be chosen by ballot immediately after the beginning of each session, by a majority of 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 nor 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 matters 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 teaching 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, etc. If any Brother feels impressed to preach the Gospel, the church shall recommend such Brother to the Association, and upon examination of the Brother's qualifications, if in 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 churches 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 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 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 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 delegate 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.

12. The Moderator and Clerk shall receive \$10.00 each for their services.

13. The Clerk shall superintend the printing of the minutes after each session of the Association.

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 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 the center of Christian unions, the supreme standards 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 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 believe in Him can partake of the Divine benefit.

6. We believe that true faith cannot proceed from the exercise 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 applicant 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 17:22; Romans 2:19; John 3:9).

8. We do not believe under the gospel dispensation that any soul is elected to eternal life unconditionally, but that those who by faith persevere to the end will be saved; that it is possible for men who have been converted to make shipwreck of faith, turn again to sin and be finally lost. Luke 9:62.

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 epistle 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 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.