MINUTES

OF THE

THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

WATER VALLEY FREE WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

CONVENED WITH

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH

September 11th, 12th, and 13th, 1930

NEXT SESSION

With Gauley Church, 5 Miles Northwest of Calhoun City, Miss., on Thursday Night Before the Second Sunday in September, . Continuing Through Friday and Saturday. Rev. W. H. Fondren Will Preach the Introductory Sermon.

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MINUTES

FIRST DAY—THURSDAY NIGHT

Rained out—No services.

SECOND DAY—MORNING SESSION

Eld. J. H. Norwood took the chair as Moderator, and read a chapter from God's Word. Prayer by Rev. J. L. Roberts. After devotional services the following churches reported by letter and proper delegates: Gauley Mount, Antioch, Springdale, Stetson Chapel, New Life, Bethlehem, and Pleasant Grove. A song was sung and the hand of fellowship was taken, thus seating the church delegation.

Rev. J. L. Roberts and Bro. Macon Vaughn, from the Missionary Baptist Church were seated with us as visitors.

The Association went into the election of officers for this session, and resulted in the election of Rev. J. H. Norwood, as Moderator; Rev. Geo. C. Lee, Clerk, and W. F. Bevills, Treasurer.

The following committees were appointed:

Preaching—Top Starnes, Martin May, and C. B. Colman.

Associational Committee—Lee Colman, Ed Logan, Bill Corder, Jack Parker, Gib Starnes, W. F. Bevills, and B. O. Tallant.

Denominational Literature—Rev. W. H. Fondren, Rev. J. L. Roberts, and Rev. D. M. Smitherman.

Temperance Committee—Rev. H. B. Rogers, Chas. Ard, and Lon. Morphis.

Finance—Jim Thomas, Luther Morris, and Hoy Furgerson. Education Committee—Auther Graham, Lesley White, and Jim Lee.

Sunday School Committee—Mrs. Ivy Parker, Mrs. Ida Carter, and Mrs. Ed Logan.

Obituary Committee—Joe McCoy, Emsey White, and Spence Carter.

Report of Preaching Committee

Rev. Geo. C. Lee preach Friday at 11 o'clock, Rev. J. H. Norwood Friday night, Rev. W. H. Fondren Saturday at 11 o'clock. Rev. Lee's subject: "The Lord's Supper." Rev. Norwood's subject: "Feet Washing." Signed: Top Starnes, L. M. May; and C.

B. Colman.

Adjournment for preaching. Lesson: Mark 14th; text, Matt. 16-18.

SECOND DAY—EVENING SESSION

Reading by Rev. Smitherman, Psalms, 103 Chapter. Prayer by Luther morris. Moved that the next session of this Association be with Gauley Church; and also moved and carried that Rev. W. H. Fondren preach introductory sermon.

By request of Aantioch Church, Bro. Luther Morris was ordained to the office of Deacon, and the time set for his ordination at 10:30 o'clock Saturday morning, and the following preachers were appointed as his ordination counsel: Rev. G. C. Lee, Rev. W. H. Fondren, and Rev. D. M. Smitherman.

By move and second, the Moderator read the Church Covenant, Government of the Church, also Constitution of Association and Articles of Faith of the Free Will Baptist.

Report of Denominational Literature was made and received. We, your committee on Denominational Literature, make our report. We feel the need of education, and ask that our preachers educate themselves to the Bible and that we help each other in the study of the Bible; be more prayerful and ask God to endow us with knowledge and power from Heaven, and that each one put in more time reading religious literature, and abstain from all worldliness, and recommend that in each Sunday School we use the Free Will Baptist literature. Signed: D. M. Smitherman, J. L. Roberts, and W. H. Fondren.

Educational Report—We, the Educational Committee, do urge that the parents of this Association teach their children the way of the Lord by having family prayer, and attending Sunday School and Bible School, and to love one another, and to love their father and mother; we should have more Sunday Schools in our churches, and that we should use Free Will Baptist literature as much as possible. Signed: Leslie White, J. L. Lee, and Auther Grayham.

Report of Temperance Committee—We, your committee, report on Temperance. We urge that we be temperant in our every day walk of life, and especially in strong drink, and in our conversation. Signed: Rev. H. B. Rogers, C. J. Ard, Lon Morphis.

PREACHERS' REPORT

Eld. H. B. Rogers made his orally: "My health has been

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PREACHERS' REPORT

Eld. H. B. Rogers made his orally: "My health has been

such that I could not do anything, hope to be able next year to do more."

Rev. W. H. Fondren's Report: To the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association, I have preached since last Association, 43 times; have had 11 conversions; received into church, 10; baptized 9; have traveled 677 miles; married one couple; held 3 funerals; have organized one Sunday School. My address is Toccopola, Miss.

Rev. D. M. Smitherman's Report: I have preached 13 sermons since last Association; have traveled 144 miles; received on expenses, 50c; my expenses have been \$4.00. I have not been able to do very much on account of finance. Praying that God will grant my desire that we can do more, we pray His blessings on this Association. My address is Toccopola, Miss.

Rev. Geo. C. Lee's Report: I have preached, since our last Association, 100 sermons; have traveled 5,106 miles; received into church 21 members; baptized 15; had 14 professions; married 4 couple; had 3 funerals; ordained 1 Deacon; received \$483.94 help; paid \$110.50 expense; above expenses, \$373.44. My address is Calhoun City, Miss.

Rev. J. H. Norwood's Report: I have preached 15 times; preached 2 funerals; traveled 764 miles; assisted in two meetings. My address is Toccopola, Miss.

Rev. G. W. Kennedy's Report: Preached 14 times; received on help, \$6.60; paid \$4.25 expenses; traveled 75 miles; had two professions of faith; had one meeting, assisted in one. My address is Sherman, Miss.

Rev. W. H. Holman made his report orally: "I have not been in your Association this time, and my health has been poor, so I haven't done any work. My address is Toccopola, Miss."

Adjourned to meet Saturday morning at 9 o'clock for business. Rained out at night and we had no services.

Delegates were assigned homes.

THIRD DAY—MORNING SESSION

Met by song, and reading from Jno. 12th chapter by Rev Kennedy, and prayer. We had another song and Rev. J. M. Hass, of the Vernon Association, and Rev. W. H. Holman, of this Association, and Rev. G. W. Kennedy, whom were not present for the Friday session, were given the hand of fellowship and seated with us as corresponding delegates, and also Revs. Holman and Kennedy as delegates.

There was a move to have the Communion and Feet Wash-

ing Saturday night, but was later called in by the Moderator.

The Moderator appointed Bro. Martin May on the Associational Committee in place of B. O. Tallant, whom was absent.

Rev. J. M. Haas made a talk, which was very impressive on the work of his Association and their relation to our Association.

The Moderator appointed Rev. Geo. C. Lee and Rev. W. H. Fondren as corresponding delegates to the Vernon Association, which convenes with New Macedonia Church, 3 miles East of Tupelo, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, and continues through Sunday and Monday following.

Obituary Report received. We, your commitee, make our report: We find that our church mourns the loss of four of their members, who have passed to the great beyond since our last sitting, and three of them were beloved Deacons who were the strength in their churches, as follows: Deacon Bob McCarver, of the Bethlehem Church; Deacon Jack Reynolds, of the Springdale Church, and Deacon S. C. Lee, of the Gauley Church, and Sister Henry Ard, of Bethlehem Church, all of whom died in the Faith. Peace to their beloved ashes, and may we meet them in Heaven. Signed: Joe McCoy, Emsey White, Spence Carter.

Finance Report—We find this Association weak and in bad shape financially. We recommend that each church come together before calling pastor, and have an understanding as to what financial support the church can give the pastor for his time and service rendered. We recommend that each church have a free will offering each month and keep some in the treasury of the church for incidental expense of the church. We find that there has been paid into the Association, as minute funds and clerk fee, \$29.80. Signed: Jim Thomas, Luther Morris, and Hoy Furgerson.

Sabbath School Report—We, your committee, find only two Sunday Schools in our Association, one at Antioch, and one at Pleasant Grove. We regret that our churches have failed to organize and maintain Sunday Schools. We find that Springdale has recently organized a school. We urge our people to work up an interest in our different churches in the good of a Sabbath School and go forward in the work. Signed: Mrs. Ivy Parker, Mrs. Ida Carter, and Mrs. Ed Logan.

Associational Committee Report—We have made our business to see after each church and each preacher. As far as we can learn, they are in faith and practice. We ask that each church in this Association hold conferences as often as four times a year, and if the pastor fails to be present, we ask that the Deacon take charge of this service and act as the Moderator, and see

after the Lord's business in the right way. Signed: Lee Colman, Ed Logan, Bill Corder, Jack Parker, B. O. Tallant, L. M. May, Gib Starner, and W. F. Bevills.

TREASURER'S REPORT TO ASSOCIATION

We find there has been paid into the Treasury of this body as follows:

Antioch Church	\$6.60
New Life Church	2.90
Springdale Church	3.50
Gauley Church	5.00
Stetson Chapel Church	4.00
Bethlehem Church (Sub. \$13.50 pd.)	5.00
Pleasant Grove Church	2.80
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TOTAL	\$29.80

W. F. BEVILLS, Treasurer.

Rev. Lee, as chairman of Ordaining Counsel, with Revs. Fondren and Smitherman, ordained Luther Morris at this time to Deaconship of Antioch Church.

Adjourned for preaching by Rev. W. H. Fondren, who preached from Heb. 11 Chapter. Subject: "Love."

THIRD DAY—EVENING SESSION

Reading and prayer by Bro. Dock Henderson from Rom. 6th Chapter. Rev. J. M. Haas again made a talk which was gladly received.

Another glorious session of the Water Valley Association has come to a close and we would feel that we had failed in the completion of our work, if we did not have something to say in behalf of the good people of Pleasant Grove Church and community who entertained this session of the Association so loyally. We therefore extend our heartfelt thanks to the church and community for your kindnesses shown the body, and for your nice homes and wholesome food given us, both in your homes and on the church ground. We shall ever hold sweet memories of this meeting and pray God may bless each of you and your homes, and may Pleasant Grove Church continue on the highway of Holliness till we meet again.

CHURCH LETTERS TO ASSOCIATION

We, the Church of God, denominated Free Will Baptist, worshiping at Pleasant Grove, to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association, greeting: We send as delegates to represent us in your body, W. S. Warren, S. P. Carter and John Bennett. Our membership is 59, resident 28, non-resident 31. Our Deacons are Joe McCoy, Jim Thomas, and Lee Colman; Clerk, Jim Thomas. Pastor, Rev. G. C. Lee. Time of meeting, second Sunday in each month. Spiritual interest, good. We have a good Sunday School. We send \$2.80 for minute funds. Our address is Thaxton, Miss. We have had added by experience and baptism, 5.

We, the Church of God, known as Free Will Baptist, worshiping at Antioch, to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association: We send as delegates to represent us in your body, Dock Henderson, M. L. Morris, and Lesley White; alternates, G. C. White, D. W. Henderson. Our Deacons are, W.F. Bevills, J. P. Hamilton, and Bro. L. M. Morris appointed to be ordained at this session of the Association to Deacon office. Our pastor is Rev. J. M. Haas. We have four ordained preachers—Rev. J. H. Norwood, Rev. W. H. Fondren, Rev. W. H. Holman, and Rev. Dave Smitherman. We have had conferences 11 times since last session of Association, average attendance, 18 members at each conference. Sermons preached past year, as follows: Rev Haas, 23; Rev. Norwood, 4; Rev. Smitherman, 3; Rev. Holman, 3; Rev. Fondren, 2; Rev. O. C. Weaver, 2; Rev. Rogers, 1; Rev. Guyton, 4. Our membership, 65. We have 9 additions this year; dropped 2 from list. State of religion, good. We have a good Sunday School and prayer meeting. We send \$6.50 minute funds. Our meeting day is second Sunday in each month. Our address is Toccopola, Miss.

We, the Church of God, denominated Free Will Baptist, worshiping at New Life Church, send our report to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association. We send as delegates, Bro. Lon Morphis, Bill Corder, and Chester Hitchcock; alternates, Bell Corder and Annie Hitchcock. Our Deacons are, Jess Morphis and T. L. Handcock and J. M. Corder; Clerk, Hubert Roberts; our pastor, Rev. W. H. Fondren. We send \$2.90 for minute funds. Received into church, 5. Our meeting day, fourth Sunday in each month. Our membership is 30. Our address is Houlka, Miss. Our Clerk past, R. W. Hill.

We, the Church of God, denominated Free Will Baptist, worshiping at Bethlehem Church, to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association: We send to represent us in your body, Alford Grayham, Ed Logan, and Ernest Grayham; as alternates, Monro

Ramsey and Luther Smitherman. Our Deacons are, B. E. Sugg, Auther Grayham, Charley Ard, Sam Tucker, and Bill Stubblefield; our Clery, B. E. Sugg; Treasurer, Rosie Tallant; our pastor past year, Rev. Lee; 1930-31, Rev. J. H. Haas. We send \$13.50 for minute funds. We have 135 members. We have a prayer meeting, two ordained preachers, Revs. H. B. Rogers and G. W. Kennedy. Our meeting day is second Sunday in each month. Spiritual interest good. We have had 2 deaths, Bro. Bob McCarver, one of our Deacons, and Sister Henry Ard; they both died in the faith—they died as they lived—trusting in God. We have had added, since last year, 15 by experience and 3 by letter—18 in all. Our address is Pontotoc, Miss., R. F. D. No. 2.

We, the Church of God, denominated Free Will Baptist, worsiping at Gauley, to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association: We send as delegates, Jim Lee, Ivy Parker, and Winfred Parker; as alternate, Mrs. Maud Goodson. Our Clerk is J. F. Parker; Pastor, Rev. G. C. Lee; Clerk for next year, Morgan Parker; our Deacons are H. S. Parker and Ernest Keenum. We have lost one of our pioneer members, Deacon S. C. Lee, who was a faithful member and official from organization of the church, and was true to the faith until death. We have had conference several times. We have one ordained minister, Rev. Geo. C. Lee. Our time of meeting, the fourth Sunday in each month. Our address is Calhoun City, Miss.

We, the Church of God, denominated Free Will Baptist, worshiping at Springdale, to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association: We send as delegates to represent us in your body, Top Starnes, Jodie Walker, and G. C. Starnes; alternates, D. H. McClarty and Will Sullivan. Our Deacons are, Mc Bowles, T. F. McCord; C. B. Colman, Clerk; Top Starnes, Treasurer; our pastor is Rev. W. H. Fondren. Time of meeting, first Sunday in each month. We have lost one of our beloved members and Deacon, Bro. Jack Reynolds, who died in the faith. We send \$3.50 for minute funds. Received into church, 5 members; resident members, 35; non-resident, 40. Our address is Denmark, Miss.

We, the Church of God, denominated Free Will Baptist, worshiping at Stetson Chapel Church, to the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association: We send as delegates to represent us in your body, Carl Frezell, D. H. Ferguson, and H. C. May. Rev. J. M. Hass is our pastor; M. G. Aykers, our Clerk; Pearl Blaylock, Treasurer; L. M. May and B. O. Tallant, our Deacons. We have had 16 additions to our church this year by experience. State of religion, good. Our meeting day, third Sunday in each month. Membership, 60; non-resident, 20; resident, 40. Our address is

Toccopola, Miss., R. F. D.

REV. J. H. NORWOOD, Moderator, REV. GEO. C. LEE, Clerk, W. F. BEVILLS, Treasurer.

CHURCH COVENANT

1st. We believe that the union of Christians in a visible church is sanctioned by the teachings of Christ and the practice of His apostles, and that it is adapted to promote piety and increase Christian influences. We do now heartily enter into covenant before God and with each other.

2nd. We will constantly strive to maintain true piety in our own hearts, keep ourselves in vital communion with God and commend religion to others, not only in words, but by means of a devout spirit and a holy example, always careful of each other's reputation and usefulness.

3rd. We will watch over each other in the spirit of true charity, seeking to bear each other's burdens, assist the needy, strengthen the weak, encourage the despondent, sympathize with the sorrowful, reprove the erring, win back the straying to duty, maintain wholesome discipline and receive Christian admonition in meekness, keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace and cheerfully submit to such regulations as the majority may approve. We will contribute according to our ability for pastorial support, maintain secret and family prayer; and aid by our presence and otherwise, in sustaining public and social worship.

4th. We will give an active and consistent support to the great cause that aims to promote religion. We will refuse all sanctions to those wordly amusements which tend to lessen true piety in ourselves or weaken Christian influence over others, so that religion be not reproached on our account. May He who has promised His help enable us to keep this covenant, and grant us grace to be faithful in all things until He shall gather us to Himself and crown us with final victory. Amen.

GOVERNMENT OF CHURCHES

The local church is an independent body so far as it relates to its own government, the transaction of its own business, the choice of its officers and the discipline of its members.

Persons who give evidence of piety are received to membership by a vote of the church. If objections are made they should be stated to the church; if the objections are judged to be valid, the candidate should not be received to fellowship. The right hand of fellowship is given to all persons received by the church.

Persons expelled from sister churches for any cause, or from any church for immorality, should not be received until first giving satisfaction.

Letters of dismission and commendation are granted on request to members in good standing by vote of the church on their removal from its limits. Ministers are received and dismissed by letter, as other members, except when they come from or go to other denominations, in which case a council of ministers should be called to advise respecting the action.

It is the duty of the church to unite with some association,

and represent itself regularly by delegates and letters.

No person shall be a delegate from a church or other body in our denomination unless he is a member of and appointed by the church which he claims to represent.

CONSTITUTION OF THE WATER VALLEY FREE WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

- 1. This Association shall be known as the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association of Mississippi, and shall be composed of delegates from different churches forming the same, each church being entitled to three delegates and their ministers, clerks, deacons and treasurer.
- 2. Each church in this Association shall be an advisory body and shall control its own internal affairs.
- 3. This body shall be an advisory council, but having no authority over the churches.
- 4. The officers of this Association shall be a Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer, who shall be chosen at each session by a majority of votes.
- 5. This Association shall meet annually on Thursday night before the second Sunday in Setember of each year, and hold together until Saturday night and have the communion and feet washing on Friday night of each session.
- 6. Churches wishing to become members of this Association must adopt the articles of faith and this constitution, and conform to its usage.
- 7. We agree, as churches of this Free Will Baptist Association, to use our best influence to promote the cause of Christ.
- 8. The minutes of this Association shall be the order of the business.
- 9. The Moderator of this Association at each annual session shall read the articles of faith in the minutes to the Association when convened.

- 10. The Treasurer of this Association is to collect from the delegates of each church at the annual session and report to this body the first day of its meeting, ten cents per capita membership fee for each church.
- 11. Each member of this Association shall remain until it adjourns.

RULES OF DECORUM

Conference shall be conducted as follows:

- 1. Extension for membership.
- 2. Hear the reading of the minutes.
- 3. Invite visiting Brothers and Sisters to sit with us
- 4. Call for unfinished business.
- 5. Call for acknowledgment.
- 6. Call for matters of dealings which are in order to come before the church.
- 7. Call for new business.
- 8. Call for absentees.
- 9. Call for miscellaneous business.
- 10. Call for move and second to close.

ARTICLES OF FAITH OF THE WATER VALLEY FREE WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

- 1. THE BIBLE—The Scripture of the Old and New Testaments were given by the inspiration of God, and the Scripture of the New Testament is our infallible rule of faith and practice.
- 2. GOD—There is one true and living God, revealed in nature as the Creator, Preserver and Righteous Governor of the universe, and in the Scripture as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and yet as one God, infinitely wise and good, whom all intelligent creatures are supremely to love, adore and obey.
- 3. CHRIST—Christ is God manifest in the flesh. In His divine nature, truly God; in His human nature, truly man; the mediator between God and man. Once crucified, He is now risen and glorified, and is our ever present Savior and Lord.
- 4. THE HOLY SPIRIT—The Scriptures assign to the Holy Spirit all the attributes of God. He is the Reprover, Comforter, Guide and Sanctifier of men.
- 5. THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD—God exercises a wise and benevolent Providence over all beings and all things by maintaining the constitution and laws of nature. He also performs

special acts of Grace, not otherwise provided for, as the highest welfare of man requires.

- 6. THE SINFULNESS OF MAN—Man was created innocent, but by disobiendience fell into a state of sin and condemnation; his posterity, therefore, inherit a fallen nature of such tendencies that all who come to years of accountability, sin and become guilty before God.
- 7. THE WORK OF CHRIST—The Son of God, by His incarnation, life, sufferings, death and resurrection, effected for all a redemption from sin that is full and free, and is the ground of salvation by faith.
- 8. THE TERMS OF SALVATION—The conditions of Salvation are repentance, or sincere sorrow for sin and hearty renunciation of it. Faith, or the unreserved commital of one's self to Christ as Savior and Lord with purpose and love to obey Him in all things. In the exercise of saving faith the soul is renewed by the Holy Spirit, freed from the dominion of sin, and becomes a child of God, continuing in faith and obedience until death.
- 9. ELECTION—God determined from the beginning to save all who should comply with the conditions of salvation, hence by faith in Christ men become His elect.
- 10. FREEDOM OF THE WILL—The human will is free and self-controlled, having power to yield to the influence of the truth and the spirit and live, or to resist them and perish.
- 11. SALVATION FREE—God desires the salvation of all; the Gospel invite all; the Holy Spirit strives with all, and whosoever will, may "come and take the water of life freely."
- 12. GOSPEL ORDINANCE—Baptism or the immersion of believers in water, and night communion and feet washing are ordinances to be perpetuated under the Gospel of universal obligation, and are to be administered to all true believers.

13. PERSERVERANCE — All believers in Christ, who through grace, persevere in holiness to the end of life, have promise of salvation.

- 14. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH—The divine law requires that one day in seven be set apart from secular employment and amusements, for rest, worship, holy works and activities and for personal communion with God.
- 15. RESURRECTION AND FINAL RETRIBUTION—The Scriptures teach the resurrection of all men at the last day. They that have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment; then the wicked will "go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous unto eternal life."