

MINUTES

— of the —

Fifty-First Annual Session

— of the —

WEST FLORIDA

**LIBERTY FREE WILL BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION**

Held With

SPRING HILL CHURCH

Four Miles North of Bonifay, Florida

OCTOBER 12th and 13th, 1939

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OFFICERS

BRO. G. W. OWENS..... Moderator
N. E. CHESNUT..... Clerk and Treasurer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

J. H. Mears, *Chairman*

T. D. Owens
E. C. Anderson

A. J. Pitts
W. C. Pitts

David Cook
Jim Strickland

The next session of the Association will convene with Piney Grove Church six miles South of Chipley, Florida, on Thursday before the Third Sunday in October, 1940 and continue two days. The introductory to be preached by Rev. John M. Rich.

The next Union Meeting will convene with St. Johns Church two miles South of Bonifay, Florida, on Saturday before the Second Sunday in August, 1940. Rev. Floyd Cherry to preach the Introductory.

Proceedings

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According to previous appointments the Fifty-First Annual session of the West Florida Liberty Free Will Baptist Association met with Spring Hill Church on October 12 and 13, 1939.

THURSDAY MORNING SESSION

Song by Choir. Prayer by Rev. John M. Rich. Opening song, "Jesus Lover of My Soul." Introductory by Rev. Floyd Cherry. Scriptural lesson a portion of Pauls letter to the Church at Corinth. Text 27, verse of the above lesson. Closing Prayer by Rev. Floyd Cherry. Closing song by Choir. Dismissed until one o'clock by Rev. J. C. Eldridge.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Opening Song, "Take The Name Of Jesus With You." Opening Prayer by Rev. W. M. Duncan.

BUSINESS SESSION

Opens with Scriptural lesson from Third Chapter of James, by the Moderator. Prayer by the Moderator, G. W. Owens. A call was made for the letters from the various Churches and received the following letters and seated the delegates as follows:

St. John's Church—Sis. May Cook, Sis. Rosa Young, Earl Cook, A. B. Cook, J. W. Nelson, N. E. Chesnut and E. L. Nelson.

Pleasant Hill—C. E. Mears, Cletus Birch, Sis. Pearl Yates.
Crescent City—Represented by Letter only.

Liberty—Sis. Lula McFarland, T. M. Hall and David Cook.

Spring Hill—Grady Rich, J. I. Mears, J. L. Smith, Sis. Janie Mears, E. C. Watkins, C. S. Parish, E. C. Anderson.

New Harmony—J. D. Hughes.

Beulah—Sis. Ida Champion, Ben Champion, Sis. W. C. Pettis.

Blountstown—Sis. R. J. Pendarvis, F. M. Knight. J. C. Ham, W. M. Crochan, W. J. Mears, E. L. Branch, Sis. Norah Franklin.

Poplar Head—Sis. Roxie Pitts, Sis. Annie Olive, A. J. Petts, Russell Partin. G. W. Usery.

St. Paul—C. C. Clemons.

Piney Grove—R. E. Golden, W. H. Shores, W. R. Riley, Ernest Owen.

Cowarts Creek—A. Fowler, Walter Anderson, Cary Vann, M. C. Dixon.

Organization of Association, Brother G. W. Owens re-elected Moderator, Rev. T. E. Ross, Assistant Moderator and N. E. Chesnut, Secretary and Treasurer.

A Call for Petitionary Letters and received none.

A Call for Correspondants from Sister Associations:

From State Line Association—Roy Conner, S. G. Carter, E. S. Jones, J. M. Adams.

From Union Hill Association—W. A. Clark and wife and Dallas Barefoot.

Visitors from Salem Association—Rev. J. C. Eldridge, Sis. Delia Eldridge, W. L. Eldridge, Thomas Justice, J. R. Hayes and J. D. Mears.

Address of Welcome by Rev. T. E. Ross. Response by Rev. Floyd Cherry.

Moved and carried that the Moderator, Assistant Moderator and Clerk give the visitors a hand shake of welcome.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Committee On Divine Service—A. B. Cook, E. C. Anderson and Henry Mears.

Committee On Temperance—A. B. Nelson, W. C. Pettis and J. W. Nelson.

Committee On Education—Rev. Floyd Cherry, David Cook, F. M. Knight and Redden Riley.

Committee On Finance—E. L. Branch, Sis. Noah Franklin, Sis. W. C. Pettis, Rev. W. M. Martin and Rev. John M. Rich.

Committee On Resolutions—Rev. G. L. Shutes, J. L. Smith, J. C. Fowler, A. J. Pitts and G. W. Usery.

Committee On Sabbath School—Sis. Roxie Pitts, Sis. Janie Mears, Sis. Mary Cook, Sis. Annie Olive, Ernest Owen and Earl Cook.

Committee On Nominations—Charley Mears, J. D. Hughes, T. M. Hall, Jesse Ham.

Committee On Obituaries—Grady Rich, Sis. Pearl Yates, Eddie Crochan, Cletis Birch, W. H. Shores.

Committee On Missions—Rev. A. B. Nelson, Ben Champion, Rev. John M. Rich, David Cook.

Moved and carried that the Association adjourn until 8:30 o'clock Friday A. M. Closing Prayer by Rev. G. L. Shutes.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DIVINE SERVICE

Rev. John M. Rich to fill the Stand at 7:30 Thursday P. M. Sermon concluded by Rev. W. M. Martin.

The congregation re-assembled at 7:30 P. M. Opening song by Choir. Opening Prayer by A. J. Pitts. Sermon by Rev. John M. Rich. Scriptural Lesson a portion of the 2nd Chapter of Hebrews. Text Third Verse. Sermon concluded by Rev. W. M. Martin.

Closing Prayer by Rev. W. M. Martin.

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION

The Association re-assembled at 9:30 o'clock Friday A. M. Opening song by Choir. Opening Prayer by Rev. J. C. Carley.

Ordination of Rev. John M. Rich by the Ordaining Counsel of The Liberty Free Will Association, Composed of Rev. T. E. Ross, Rev. Floyd Cherry and Rev. A. B. Nelson.

Song by Choir.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DEVINE SERVICE

Rev. T. E. Ross to fill the Stand at Eleven o'clock Friday A. M., Sermon concluded by G. L. Shutes.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

We your Committe On Education make the following re-

port: This is an age of Education. the torch light of knowledge is shining even to the darkest coners, in spite of this great increase in learning there is still a great need for Christian Education. There are sveral agencies in our Church for the promotion of Christian Education.

The Sunday School, The League and the Ladies Aid.

We urge a more loyal support of these agencies.

Our Church has an Education Program for the future education of its youth and others who aspire to Christian work.

We urge the support of the program. Taking these facts into consideration we reccomend, first that this Association appoint two delegates to attend a school meeting to be held in November. This meeting is to discuss and lay plans for the future of Zion Bible School.

Second that a public offering be taken at this time to go to help support the school program.

Rev. Floyd Cherry, Chairman

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Report of the Committee On Nominations will be found on lower portion of outside front cover.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON TEMPERANCE

We your Committee On Temperance submit the following report: We appreciate that in many counties, in some of our states in our grand country in recent elections have voted themselves dry, let us help this good work.

Since the prohibition law is gone bootlegging is still going on and the saloons and beer joints also have come to curse our country with liquor. It seems that our Churches are nearly the only force left to battle boose, therefore, let us as Christians abstain from all forms of alchlic drinks and to teach our children the danger of liquor. Wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging and who soever is deceived by these is not wise; Proverbs 20-1, and every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things, first Cor. 9-25.

A. B. Nelson, Chairman

ELEVEN O'CLOCK SERVICE

Opening song, "Amazing Grace." Sermon by Rev. T. E. Ross. Scriptural lesson, John 14-6. Sermon concluded by Rev. G. L. Shutes. Dismissed by Floyd Cherry for noon one hour.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Ppening song, "That Beautiful Shore." Opening prayer by Bro. E. L. Branch. Call rendered for Correspondants from sister Associations and received the following:

From Union Hill Association—Bro. W. R. Kirkland and wife and M. L. Petersson.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dear Brethern we are proud to find the spiritual condition of our Churches and the general Church interest is improving,

however, there are some of our Churches who have left off Communion and feet washing which is violation of the rule of this Association. We pray this will not occur anymore.

J. H. Mears, Chairman

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON SABBETH SCHOOL

We your Committee on Sabbath School submit the following report: Preachers and Deacons stress the need of a lively Sunday School in each Church. "Pastors Part" try to make the people see the need and good that can be accomplished by Sunday School, don't neglect or leave Sunday School without a good excuse. We find this state existing in many of our Churches the young people do their part but we fail to get the cooperation of the older heads. Until our older people take the interest they should in their Church, they shall not reap the harvest they ought.

Sis. Roxie Pitts, Chairman

CORRESPONDANTS TO SISTER ASSOCIATIONS

To State Line Association—Rev. Floyd Cherry and Ernest Owen.

To Union Hill Association—Rev. T. E. Ross and E. C. Anderson.

To Midway Association of Georgia—Rev. Floyd Cherry and E. M. Knight.

To Georgia State Association—Rev. Floyd Cherry, R. E. Golden and W. H. Shores.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON MEMORIALS

We your Committee On Memorials submit the following report: We are glad to find only three deaths in our Association this year. They are W. L. Brackins from Spring Hill Church; Bro. Clayton Scott of St. Johns Church and Sis. Cora Matthews of Liberty Church. We trust that our loss is Heaven's gain. Brethern let us all be faithful so that when our summons shall come we may hear His "Well Done Thou Faithful."

Grady Rich, Chairman

Public offering for Zion Bible School, \$6.75.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

We your Committee On Finance submit the following report:

We find in Treasury	\$ 2.15
For Minutes	26.15
For Missions	2.70
For Zion Bible School	9.43

TOTAL	\$40.43
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E. L. Branch, Chairman

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

We your Committee on Missions submit the following report: Realizing that Jesus Mission was not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance we wish to stress the need for mission work by our people.

We recommend that the Moderator of this Association appoint one member of each Church to make the collections for missions or request the pastor of each Church to make the appointment.

David J. Cook, Chairman

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

Be it resolved that this Association go on record by the Moderator and Clerk, signing an instrument of writing stating the proceedings of the executive Committee investigating the trouble between the members of the first Free Will Baptist Church of Blountstown, Fla. Also the action of the Executive Committee. Also the confirmation of the decision of the Executive Committee in regard to the above said Church. Be it further resolved that a copy of the instrument of writing be filed in the Archive of the Association. Be it farther resolved that the resolution to drop ministers names from the role in our minutes for being absent at the Association be repealed and the Church look after the ministers holding membership with them. And, report them by name in their corresponding letter to the Association and if a minister be under charges report same to the Association.

Rev. G. L. Shutes, Chairman

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Moved and carried to have 100 letter blanks printed. Rev. Floyd Cherry, A. B. Nelson and F. M. Knight was appointed as a committee to arrange the form of said blanks.

Moved and carried to have 300 Minutes printed.

Moved and carried to retain the same Executive Committee.

Moved and carried to pay the Clerk \$7.50 for his service.

Moved and carried to offer a resolution of thanks to the people of Spring Hill Community for their untiring efforts to supply every need of the Association.

Moved and Carried to adjourn until Thursday morning before the Third Sunday in October, 1940.

LIBERTY ASSOCIATION MINISTERS ORDAINING BOARD

Rev. T. E. Ross, Rev. A. B. Nelson Rev. J H: Chesnut

RESOLUTION OF THANKS

We Delegates and Messengers that compose the Liberty Free Will Baptist Association do sincerely thank the good people of Spring Hill Church and surrounding community for the bountiful spread and also for the goodness and hospitality shown us during our sojourn among them we pray God's richest blessings upon them.

NAMES OF ORDAINED MINISTERS

Floyd Cherry

J. C. Carnley

A. B. Nelson

W. M. Martin

John M. Rich

J. H. Chesnut

W. M. Duncan

J. I. Chason

C. H. Matthews

G. L. Shutes

T. E. Ross

Statistical Table

CHURCHES and PASTORS	CLERKS and ADDRESSES	Baptism	By Letter	Restored	Con. of Faith	Total Receive	Dis. by Letter	Expelled	Died	Total Members
Piney Grove, Floyd Cherry.....	T. D. Owens, Chipley, Fla.	1	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	197
Blountstown, A. B. Nelson.....	W. I. Mears, Blountstown, Fla.....	6	5	1	6	18	0	0	0	61
Beulah, T. E. Ross.....	W. C. Pettis, Chipley, Fla.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	68
Pleasant Hill, T. E. Ross.....	J. W. Yates, Bonifay, Fla.....	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	38
Poplar Head, J. B. Lovering.....	A. F. Squires, Bonifay, Fla.....	9	3	1	0	13	0	0	0	78
St. Johns, J. C. Eldridge.....	N. E. Chesnut, Bonifay, Fla.....	4	0	0	0	4	0	2	1	125
Spring Hill, Lee Mixon.....	Grady Rich, Bonifay, Fla.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	49
Cowarts Creek, J. C. Eldridge.....	J. C. Fowler, Dothan, Ala.....	22	1	0	4	27	0	0	0	131
Liberty, D. W. Pool.....	Sis. Lula McFarland, Vernon, Fla.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	17
New Hope, J. I. Chason.....	Allen Bacon, Crescent City, Fla.....	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	22
St. Paul, Floyd Cherry.....	J. L. Gainey, Vernon, Fla.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
New Harmony, J. C. Carney.....	Joe Hughes, Chipley, Fla.....	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	21

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Introductory Sermon.
2. Call for Correspondant Letters and Enrollment of Delegates.
3. Organization—Election of Moderator and Clerk.
4. Call for Petitionary Letters.
5. Call for Correspondents from Sister Conventions.
6. Appointment of Committees.
7. Appointment of Correspondents.
8. Reading of Corresponding Letters.
9. Hearing Reports of Committees.
10. Miscellaneous Business.

OUR HONORED DEAD**W. L. Brackins****Clayton Scott****Sis. Cora Matthews****CHURCH DECORUM**

1. The Church may choose a pastor annually at last conference in Association year, or if they prefer may choose a pastor for an indefinite length of time to continue from year to year as long as he may deem it proper to keep up the connection.

2. When it becomes necessary a pastor may be chosen at any other time, but if the choice be made at a special conference the time must be appointed at a monthly meeting of the church.

3. The pastor shall be Moderator of Church. but when the Moderator, being present, same as absent or does not sit, a suitable brother shall be appointed in his place.

4. There shall be two or more deacons in the church whose duty it shall be to superintend the collection and distribution of all contributions made for pastor, etc., and to distribute the bread and wine in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

5. The deacons shall also take notice of such members as refuse or neglect to partake of the Lord's Supper and endeavor to ascertain the cause, that the same may be laid before the Church Conference if necessary.

6. Some suitable member shall be appointed clerk, and it shall be his duty to do all the recording and other writing pertaining to the business of the church, and preserve a file of the Minutes of the Association.

7. When a clerk is appointed all the books, minutes, etc., belonging to the clerk, shall be immediately turned over to him by his predecessor.

8. When it becomes necessary, a committee of not less than three male members, well acquainted with business, shall be appointed, whose duty it shall be to give advice to brethren who apply to them relative to cases of dealing, etc., with the church.

9., The church shall hold two days meeting embracing Saturday and the Lord's Day following, the first of which shall be the regular time for conference.

10. It shall be the duty of every member, male or female to attend each conference, if they can, for on that day the pastor is expected to instruct the church in a special manner by giving plain and pointed lessons on church doctrine, discipline and rules of holy living.

11. Any male member who shall fail to attend three successive conferences, and any member who may be generally remiss in attending meetings of the church according to covenant (Article 10) shall be cited to appear in conference and answer for his conduct, but the church may exempt members from this if necessary.

12. Conference shall be opened as follows: First prayer; unless divine service has just been concluded, and generally then, Second, invite visiting brethren to have seats with us; Third, open doors for reception to members; Fourth, call for absentees; Fifth, for acknowledgments; Sixth, for references or deferred business; Seventh, for matters of dealing which are in order to come before the church; Eighth, for miscellaneous business.

13. Visiting Brethren called in as help from other churches shall be allowed to vote.

14. An ordinary member of a Baptist church which does not hold this church in fellowship, may be received into this church without a letter when it is made apparent that his Christian character is irreproachable and that he has applied for a letter and could not obtain it because he wanted to join this or some sister church. All other persons must join by letter or baptism.

15. We receive members by experience or baptism; on confession of faith; by letter or restoration.

16. When the Moderator calls for absentees the Clerk shall inform the church what male members have been absent from three successive conferences, and the Moderator shall appoint some brother or brethren to cite each of them the next conference.

17. No member shall be expelled unless he has been cited verbally or in writing to attend his trial, provided his residence be known to the church.

18. When a witness, not a member of the church, is introduced, he shall not be examined until the question has been put to the church: "Will you hear the testimony of the witness?"

19. The evidence in every case of dealing and acknowledgment shall be printed in the church book.

20. Members dismissed from the church by the letter who become disorderly or continue to hold their letter without good reason shall be cited to conference to answer for their conduct.

21. Expelled members may be restored to fellowship on their petition, if their walk since expulsion has convinced the church that they have sincerely repented of their former evil.

22. A vote shall not be taken on any question without a move and second, and on all important questions the vote shall be taken by rising to the feet.

23. No motion shall be made while a move and second is before the conference.

24. It shall be considered disorderly for a member to absent himself from conference when an important question is to be decided but a member upon request may be exempted by the church from voting on either side in peculiar cases.

25. No member shall leave the house during conference without a sufficient cause, nor engage in conversation or whispering, without being subjected to be called to order by the Moderator.

26. All discussion in conference must be conducted with calmness and good feeling. Those who speak must rise to their feet and keep to the point in debate.

27. No one shall speak more than three times on the same subject without permission of the Moderator, nor shall the remarks be unreasonably long.

28. When the Moderator speaks he must nominate some brother as Moderator in his stead.

29. No one shall be interrupted while speaking unless it be necessary to call him to order.

30. We believe it to be the duty of the church to communicate, wash the saint's feet as often as the church sees fit, the expenses to be paid by the church.

31. Members not in good standing should not commune, but the administration should not be deferred on account of any ordinary matter of dealing.

32. Public fasting, humiliation and prayer shall be observed on proper occasions.

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ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. We believe there is but one living and true God whose name is Jehovah, the maker and ruler of the universe.—1st Cor. 8:6; 1st Tim. 2:5-6.

2. We believe that there is one Lord Jesus Christ by Whom are all things, and by Whom salvation is made secure.—Heb. 2:9; St. John 3:16; 1st. John 2:2.

3. We believe that in the begining that God made man upright and placed him in a state of glory, without the least mixture of misery from which he voluntarily, by transgression fell, and by that means brought on himself a miserable and mortal state, subject to death.—Genesis 2:17; 3:19.

4. We believe that no man shall suffer in hell for the lack of Christ.—Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; 1st Tim. 2:4.

5. We believe that the holy scriptures are the word of God and that they are the only rule of faith and practice.—Acts 17:30; Heb. 3:10; 1st John 5:10.

6. We believe that sinners are drawn to God, the Father, by the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ, the Son.—2nd Tim. 3:16-17.

7. We believe that good works are the fruits of faith and faith without work is dead.—Luke 14-16; Math. 28-29; Luke 13:3-5; Acts 3:19-38; St. Mark 1:15.

8. We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free and attainable by all mankind.—Math. 11:27-30; St. John 6:44-65; Psalms 1:1; Titus 2:11-12.

9. We believe that Commemoration and Feet Washing are the ordinances of Christ and immersion only is baptism.—St. John 31:1; Tim. 5:6; Psalms 28:1-17.

10. We believe that all Christians should unite in performing the sacred ordinances.—Rom. 12:4-5.

11. That the end of the world is approaching when Christ will descend from Heaven and raise the dead from their graves to equal retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place, the righteous being adjudged to everlasting happiness and the wicked to endless punishment, and this judgment will fix forever the final state of man in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.—Rev. 22:12; St. John 14:2-3.

DECORUM OF LIBERTY ASSOCIATION

Articles 1. This Association shall be composed of delegates from churches in good standing only, and shall be called together by the Moderator of last session if present. If absent, by his assistant, or some one elected by the body.

Article 2. This Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.

Article 3. The Moderator and Clerk of the last session shall officiate until the body is organized and new officers elected by ballot.

Article 4. The Moderator shall call the body to order and see that order is preserved. Submit all actions to the body. He shall have the same right of speech as any other member, but appoint some other brother as chairman while speaking. He shall not have the right to vote unless it be in case of a tie, then he may cast the deciding vote.

Article 5. The delegates shall be enrolled by the Clerk as they are seated in the body. And the roll shall be called each morning and all not answering to their names marked absent.

Article 6 That no delegate or minister shall be allowed to absent himself from the body during any session without permission from the Moderator.

Article 7. And that each minister shall make a report of how many churches he is serving, if any, and what each church has paid him for his service.

Article 8. That no minister shall be considered in good standing that officiates in the rites of matrimony where either party has been divorced except it be for fornication.

Article 9. That no church shall be considered in this body that retains a minister or deacon that has more than one living wife or drinks intoxicating beverages.

Article 10. All business shall be brought before the body by move and second and shall be disposed of according to good usage. But no move shall be submitted to the body when there is a move before the house, unless the first one be withdrawn by the person who made such move, and no person shall be allowed to speak more than three (3) times on the same subject, and not more than ten (10) minutes each time without a move and second carried by the body.

Article 11. No person shall be disturbed while speaking so long as he keeps to the point in debate, only by the Moderator, and then only to call him to order. Only one person shall be allowed to speak at a time and he must rise to his feet and address the Moderator, and he must not use abusive language or personal reflection upon any one.

Article 12. This Association shall have a treasurer and executive committee to be elected annually. And no church shall be considered in this body who shall, or have retained a minister that has stepped aside from his obligations in any form (as in 1st. Tim. 3 Chap.) unless said minister has shown by his actions that he has repented of the former evil.

Article 13. That any minister who will voluntarily step aside immediately turn his credentials over to the executive committee and said executive committee shall visit various churches to see if they are in good standing or not and help them to retain good order.

Article 14. That no church shall retain a minister or deacon who does not rule his own house well.

Article 15. That no church shall be recorded in this body who does not commune and wash feet at least twice (2) a year and who does not have conference quarterly and each church shall state in its associational letter as to whether this ordinance has been kept or not. And also state how much it has paid its pastor. All ministers serving churches shall preach at least one sermon a year on doctrine and rules of holy living.

Article 16. Any preacher belonging to this body who sends an appointment or serving churches who fail to meet at the appointed hour shall be due acknowledgments to congregation or church.

Article 17. No preacher shall preach in our churches that cannot bring a clear record from his home church.

Article 18. No preacher shall pastor a church unless he on his first trip produce his credentials.