

MINUTES
OF THE
Fifty-Second Annual Session
OF THE
WEST FLORIDA
LIBERTY FREE WILL
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

HELD WITH
Piney Grove Church
Eight Miles South-West of Chipley, Fla.
OCTOBER 17th and 18th, 1940

OFFICERS

BRO. ERNEST OWEN - - - Moderator
N. E. CHESNUT - - - Clerk and Treasurer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

J. H. MEARS, Chairman
T. D. OWENS, A. J. PITTS, E. L. NELSON
E. C. ANDERSON, DAVID COOK

The next session of The Association will convene with Poplar Head Church, Six Miles South of Bonifay, Fla., on Thursday before the Third Sunday in October 1941

The Introductory will be preached by Rev. Floyd Cherry.

The next Union Meeting will convene with St. Paul Church, Vernon, Fla., on Saturday before the Second Sunday in August, 1941. Rev. J. H. Chesnut will preach the Introductory.

Proceedings

According to previous appointments the Fifty-Second Annual Session of the West Florida Liberty Free Will Baptist Association met with Piney Grove Church on Oct. 17th and 18th, 1940.

THURSDAY MORNING SESSION

Opening song, "Swing the Door Open Wide". Opening prayer by Rev. W. M. Duncan. Sermon by Rev. John M. Rich. Scriptural lesson, a portion of first Chapter Jonah. Prayer by Rev. John M. Rich. Central thought in sermon, Soul Winning For God. Closing prayer by A. J. Pitts. Closing song by choir. Benediction by Rev. A. B. Nelson. Noon one hour.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Opening song by choir. Scriptural lesson by Moderator G. W. Owens. Lesson 3rd chapter of James. The Association entered into a business session.

A call was made for the letters from the various churches and received the following letters and seated the delegates as follows:

Spring Hill—Sis. J. I. Mears, Grady Rich, Sis. Grady Rich.

St. Johns—A. B. Cook, Sis. May Cook, Oma Lee Dinkins, Ruth Nelson, J. H. Moore, Sis. J. H. Moore, E. L. Nelson and N. E. Chesnut.

Liberty—David Cook and Berry Bush.

Piney Grove—W. D. Pippin, Homer Owens, Ernest Owens, W. H. Shores, Sis. Daisy Williams, Sis. Oma Owens, Sis. Ina Riley, Sis. R. E. Golden and T. D. Owens.

Blountstown—W. I. Mears, E. L. Branch, F. M. Knight.

Poplar Head—Sis. May Weeks, Sis. Lovenia Davis, C. R. Weeks.

Cowarts Creek—A. Fowler, J. C. Fowler, Sis. Mary Fowler, Sis. Lizzie Fowler and K. B. Fowler.

Pleasant Hill—Chatus Birch, C. E. Mears, Sis. Rhoda Birch.

Beulah—H. L. Elmore.

Organization of Association—Bro. Ernest Owens was elected Moderator. Bro. G. W. Owens was elected Assistant Moderator and N. E. Chesnut re-elected Clerk and Treasurer.

A call was made for petitionary letters and received none.

A call was made for Correspondents from Sister Associations. From Union Hill Association, Dallas Barefoot, Sis. Fletcher Bolden and A. T. Moss.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Committee on Divine Service—A. J. Pitts and Sis. Oma Lee Dinkins.

Committee on Temperance—A. B. Nelson, W. D. Pippin, Sis. Lizzie Golden and A. Fowler.

Committee on Education—Rev. John M. Rich, Rev. Floyd Cherry and David Cook.

Committee on Finance—Sis. Rosa Young, Sis. Oma Owens and A. J. Pitts.

Committee on Resolutions—A. B. Cook, J. H. Mears and Lee Smith.

Committee on Sabbath School—Sis. Daisy Williams, Sis. May Cook, J. C. Fowler and Sis. A. F. Squires.

Committee on Nominations—Homer Owens, Charley Mears, F. M. Knight, C. R. Weeks, Sis. A. J. Pitts.

Committee on Obituaries—Rev. Floyd Cherry, Henry Moore, T. D. Owens, Sis. Ina Riley.

Committee on Missions—A. B. Nelson, Walter Mears, H. L. Elmore, Sis. Oma Lee Dinkins.

Sermon by Rev. Floyd Cherry at 2:30. Scriptural Lesson, 6th Chapter of John.

Report of Committee on Divine Service—Rev. Archie Johnson to bring the message at 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Moved and carried to adjourn until 9:30 Friday a.m. Closing song by choir. Benediction by Bro. A. B. Cook.

THURSDAY 7:00 P.M. SERVICE

Song by choir. Sermon by Rev. Archie Johnson. Scriptural lesson from a portion of 3rd chapter of Revelations. Text 3-13. Closing song by choir. Benediction by Rev. Floyd Cherry.

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION

Scriptural lesson by Moderator Bro. Ernest Owens. 23 Psalm. Opening prayer by Bro. J. M. McFatter. Song by choir, "I'll Be Satisfied.

Call for petitionary letters and received none.

Call renewed for Correspondents from sister associations and received none.

Call renewed for Corresponding letters. St. Paul Church represented by proxy by Rev. Floyd Cherry.

Report of Committee on Nominations will be found on lower half of outside cover.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON OBITUARIES

We your Committee report the following deaths in our Association during the last year.

Piney Grove—R. E. Golden and J. A. Johnson.

Liberty—Sis. Alice Cook.

St. Johns—Sis. Callie M. Nelson.

Poplar Head—Sis. Abbie Martin.

Euclah—Sis. Mary Jane Sheffield.

Our hearts are made sad by the passing of these loved ones but may we sorrow not as those who have no hope but as those who look toward a distant country whose builder and maker is God. Rev. Floyd Cherry, Chairman.

Obituaries as follows:

Bro. R. E. Golden died August 1, 1940. Bro. Golden built a character that was worthwhile. There was inbred in the innermost recesses of his being those qualities of character that stand for good citizenship, good homes, good churches and a good country. May God by the power of his spirit fill the vacancy in his home, his church and community.

May the memory of Bro. J. A. Johnson be held sacred because of the noble life that he lived. He always stood unreservedly, unswervingly for the right on every question that came up, that is the best that can be said of any man. Long may his influence linger about our hearts. Written by their pastor Rev. Floyd Cherry.

Sister Callie M. Nelson was born July 1867. She departed this life Feb. 22, 1940. She leaves her husband J. W. Nelson, three sons and a host of friends and relatives to mourn her going. Her influence will be lasting upon those who come within its circle.

Surely our loss is her gain. N. E. Chesnut.

We ask the sympathy of the association in our sorrows of the loss and death of our beloved sister Mary Jane Sheffield who God called out of our midst Aug. 21, 1940. A good old faithful servant who we all will miss her kind deeds. We feel our loss is Heaven's gain. May God bless her bereaved family that's left behind is our prayer.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

We your committee on missions beg leave to make the following report. Whereas most of our towns and cities of America and many places in the country of mission fields for the Freewill Baptist it becomes our duty to seek to send or carry the Gospel to these new fields as the Lord enables us.

Our home mission work can be forwarded by each member of our Association, contributing something to our home mission fund. We recommend that each church take a more active interest in home mission work. We suggest that each pastor appoint

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a committee of three members to look after this matter. Read Matt. 16:15. A. B. Nelson, Chairman.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DIVINE SERVICE

Rev. J. C. Eldridge to preach at 11:00 Friday.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON SABBATH SCHOOL

We your committee on Sabbath School suggest the following: We urge both old and young to take part in Sunday School, visit homes that don't take a part in Sunday School. We feel like it is good for all and give the young folks social gatherings to encourage them to go to Sunday School. Also elect Christians for your leaders. This has a lot to do in the progress of the school. Daisy Williams, Chairman.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

We your committee on Education submit the following report: In this age when so nearly everybody is getting an education we realize that our people need an education. 1. We recommend that our people support the Sunday School, League and Ladies Aid. 2. We recommend that our people subscribe and read the Gospel Herald and Free Will Baptist. 3. We heartily recommend that our people support Zion Bible School financially by encouraging students to attend and with your prayers, also that there be a collection taken at this session and afterwards that every church take a special offering before each association for the support of our school. Prayerfully submitted, Rev. John M. Rich, Chairman.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

We your committee on Finance submit the following report: We find in the treasury \$1.82. For minutes \$22.30. For Home Mission \$2.60. Zion Bible School \$1.13. Mrs. Rosa Young, Chairman.

Rev. J. C. Eldridge and wife were seated as visitors from Salem Association. 10 minutes intermission. Association reassembled. Song by choir. Public offering for Zion Bible School \$16.27. Sermon by Rev. J. C. Eldridge 11 a.m. Opening song, "If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again." Scriptural lesson, a portion of the 16th chapter of St. Johns. Text 16-22. Closing song by choir. Benediction by Dallas Barefoot. Noon 1 hour.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The association reassembled at 1:30. Opening song by choir. Opening prayer by Rev. A. B. Nelson.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON TEMPERANCE

We your committee on temperance submit the following report: We recommend that we again adopt last year's report and that we as an association try to live up to it by the help of God. Since the prohibition law is gone bootlegging is still going on and the saloons and beer joints also have come to course our country

with liquor. It seems that our churches are nearly the only force left to battle booze, therefore let us as Christians abstain from all forms of alcoholic drinks and to teach our children the danger of liquor. Wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging and whosoever 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.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

We your committee make the following report: First, be it resolved that this body devote the night service at each session to a Doctrinal sermon and that the minister to preach on that be appointed at this session for next year. Second that the last clause of the report of committee on resolutions of last session be carried out by the churches of this association, and they further recommend that each deacon take more interest in his church in taking up collections and his duty toward the upbuilding of his church. A. B. Cook, Chairman.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

We your committee submit the following report: We find the churches in very good condition so far as we know. We trust by the help of the Lord to visit each church in our association before the next association. J. H. Mears, Chairman.

The same executive committee was retained except Bro. Strickland and Bro. Pettus and Bro. E. L. Nelson were added to the committee.

The letter from the church at Crescent City telling of its distressing circumstances was read. It was moved and carried that the clerk write them a letter of sympathy and encouragement.

Moved and carried to have 300 minutes printed. Moved and carried to pay clerk \$7.50. Moved and carried to extend a resolution of thanks to the community of Piney Grove. Moved and

carried to change the election of officers from first of session to last of session. Moved and carried that regular order of business be dispensed with and elect officers by acclamation. Bro. Earnest Owens reelected Moderator for 1941. Bro. G. W. Owens assistant Moderator. N. E. Chesnut reelected clerk and treasurer.

Correspondents to Sister Associations:

To State Line Association—Rev. Floyd Cherry, Rev. John M. Rich, Ernest Owens.

To Union Hill—George Owens, Rev. A. B. Nelson.

To Midway—Rev. Floyd Cherry, Rev. John M. Rich.

Free will offering for Rev. W. M. Duncan, \$20.56. Moved and carried to adjourn until 10 a.m. Thursday before 3rd Sunday in October, 1941. Closing song by choir. Benediction by Rev. J. C. Eldridge.

Liberty Association Ministers Ordaining Board—Rev. T. E. Ross, Rev. A. B. Nelson, Rev. J. H. Chesnut.

RESOLUTIONS OF THANKS

We, the Delegates and Messengers that compose the Liberty Free Will Baptist Association do sincerely thank the good people of Piney Grove 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

D. A. Johnson

Statistical Table

CHURCHES AND PASTORS	CLERKS AND ADDRESSES								
		Baptism	By Letter	Restored	Con. of Faith	Total Received	Dis by Letter	Expelled	Died
Piney Grove, Floyd Cherry	T. D. Owens, Chipley Fla.	1	2	0	0	3	1	0	2
Blountstown, D. A. Johnson	W. I. Mears, Blountstown, Fla.	0	4	0	0	4	4	0	0
Beulah	0	0	0	0	0	7	4	1
Pleasant Hill, T. E. Ross	Clatus Birch, Bonifay, Fla.	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Poplar Head, J. B. Lovering	A. F. Squires, Bonifay, Fla.	4	2	0	1	7	3	0	1
St. Johns, John M. Rich	N. E. Chesnut, Bonifay, Fla.	4	2	0	0	6	1	1	1
Spring Hill, W. D. Pool	Grady Rich, Bonifay, Fla.	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0
Cowarts Creek, J. C. Eldridge	J. C. Fowler, Dothan, Ala.	2	2	0	0	4	0	0	0
Liberty, W. D. Pool	Sis. Lula McFarland, Vernon, Fla.	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
St. Paul, Floyd Cherry.....								

OUR HONORED DEAD**R. E. Golden****Sis. Callie M. Nelson****J. A. Johnson****Sis. Abbie Martin****Sis. Alice Cook****Sis Mary Jane Sheffield****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 ap-

pointed, 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 in 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; 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.

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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 beginning 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 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

Article 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 someone 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 services.

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. Tm. 3 Chap.) unless said minister has shown by his action 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 produces his credentials.