

Minutes

— OF THE —

Sixtieth Annual Session

— OF THE —

West Florida Liberty Free Will

Baptist Association

HELD WITH

St. John Church

BONIFAY, FLORIDA

Oct. 14 and 15, 1948



OFFICERS

BRO. JOHN M. RICH.....Moderator

BRO. WHITT LAWRENCEClerk and Treasurer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bill George A. J. Pitts D. Dykes D. J. Cook

The next session of the Association will convene with Piney Grove Church on Thursday and Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1949. Rev. Rufus Hyman to preach the Introductory Sermon.

The next Union Meeting will convene with Liberty Church. Brother Ruel Johnson to preach the Introductory Sermon.

Proceedings . . .

*Sixtieth Annual Session
West Florida Liberty Free
Will Baptist Association*

1948

SIXTIETH ANNUAL SESSION WEST FLORIDA LIBERTY FREE WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

West Florida Free Will Baptist Association met with St. John Church on October 14 and 15, 1948.

Thursday Morning Session

The Thursday morning session was begun with singing and prayers. The message of the morning, "Christ in the Midst," was well given by Rev. John M. Rich. At the noon time, a good dinner, provided by the church, was gratefully enjoyed by all.

Thursday Evening Session

The congregation then reassembled for the afternoon. The devotional service, conducted by Brother Ruel Johnson, a candidate for the ministry, was given a hearty response by all present.

The moderator, Brother Rich, read some verses in Psalms as the beginning of the evening's work.

Two reading clerks were appointed—Sister Oma Owen and Sister Corene George; also Brother Ernest Owen was chosen for music director.

A call was made for corresponding letters from the sister churches. The following letters were received and delegates seated:

PINEY GROVE—C. C. Owen, Early Peel, Oma Owen, Ernest Owen.

ABIGAIL—Bro. David Cook and Sister Bettie Taylor.

BLOUNTSTOWN—Brother and Sister F. M. Knight, Brother and Sister W. M. Cochran.

PLEASANT HILL—Brothers Charlie Mears, Harweda Brown and Roland Yates.

ST. JOHN—Brothers J. E. Sims, W. R. Pipkin, R. L. Walsingham, Nix Nelson, Henry Moore, Jack Hewitt and Raymond Nelson.

COWART'S CREEK—Brother and Sister A. Fowler, Brother Jim Smith, W. R. Barfield and Sister H. D. Adkins.

BEULAH—Brother and Sister B. H. Champion, Harvey Fowler.

HAPPY HILL—Brother Lonnie Parker and J. W. Martin.

LIBERTY—Sisters Bertha Shivers and Docia Courtney.

POPLAR HEAD—Brother and Sister A. F. Squires, Brother and Sister A. J. Pitts and Nancy Pitts.

A call was made for correspondence or representatives of sister associations. The following were received:

From Union Hill Association—Brother J. W. Barefoot.

From Salem Association—Brother J. D. Mears.

From State Line Association—Brother J. C. Harrell, Brother G. W. Nobles.

From Missionary Baptist—Brother W. E. Dickerson and wife.

From Primitive Baptist—Brother Elbert Pipkins.

A call was made for petitionary letters. None received.

The moderator was asked to appoint delegates to State Association. Appointed were: Brothers Bill George, Jack Pitts, Ary Owens, A. Fowler and J. W. Martin.

The ordaining of Brother Ruel Johnson was then done as the last item of the day's business. Brother Johnson accepted the charge of the Ordaining Council with full sincerity and we believe that he is able to do a good work in our church for Christ. Revs. A. B. Nelson and J. M. Rich were the ordaining ministers.

After the adoption of the Divine Service report, the assembly adjourned for the day.

Thursday Night Service

Rev. A. B. Nelson brought the message, which was an inspiration to all who heard him.

Friday Morning Session

With songs and a prayer, the moderator shortly called the body to order for the renewal of business.

Assignment of Committees: The various churches were given their committee assignments, as will be seen at the conclusion of reports in these minutes.

Appointment of Correspondents:

To Union Hill Association—Brothers A. B. Cook and A. B. Nelson.

To State Line Association—Brother W. R. Riley.

To Salem, October, 1949—Brothers Jack Pitts, G. W. Owens, B. H. Champion.

To Midway of Georgia—Brothers Ernest Owen, Bill George, Martie Mears.

To National Association—Brothers Charlie Mears, Ernest Owen.

A move was made and carried to let the home church have the obituaries committee.

A motion was also carried to discontinue the committee on Sunday Schools, letting the Auxiliary Committee include this in their report.

Reports of the various committees were then heard and adopted. They are as follows:

Report of Committee on Stewardship

We, your committee on Stewardship, recommend that all pastors be prompt to fill all appointments and carry out their duties as pastors, and see that the deacons perform their duties in looking after the members and keeping peace and harmony in the Lord.

BLOUNTSTOWN CHURCH

Report of Committee on Missions

We suggest that the churches which have not adopted it, go on the budget plan. This is a good way to take care of all financial needs and obligations. Budget plan outlined here:

Pay Pastor	70%
Home Missions	5%
Foreign Missions	5%
Superannuation	5%
Education	5%
General Program	5%
Other	5%

Respectfully submitted,

BEULAH CHURCH

Report of Committee on Temperance

(Adopted from Report of Last Year)

We, your committee on Temperance, submit the following report:

We must study temperance from all angles. We must practice temperance in words, appetites, passions and temper. If we practice these, we can build up our standard of temperance so as to be good examples and followers of our Lord. We suggest that all church members abstain especially from beer and liquors.

Submitted by BEULAH CHURCH

Report of the Committee on Sunday School

We are very glad to say we have the best Sunday School we have had in some time—small in number, but good in works. Sunday School serves as a magnet to draw children to the church, hence, on to God. It is a great help in evangelizing the unsaved to go to Sunday School and mingle with the saved and soul winners of our churches. Sunday School can be a great denominational builder and soul-winner for God. From the card class to the superintendent, educational. Jesus said "Learn of Me." We humbly ask all churches to strive to improve their Sunday School. If you haven't one, start now.

Submitted by ABIGAIL CHURCH

Report of Committee on Auxiliary

We, your committee on Auxiliaries, feel that we should have more work of this kind in our churches, so we, as a church, recommend that all the churches in this Association which haven't a Ladies' Aid, League and Sunday School should organize and maintain them, because we feel that all three are very helpful and upbuilding to the church.

Submitted by POPLAR HEAD CHURCH

Report of the Committee on Education

We, your committee on Education, submit the following report: It seems that the world in general is relying more and more on education. We believe that as a denomination we should have a more extensive and thorough educational program in our churches. Our children and young people are growing up in an educated world. We ought to try to educate our young people in order that they will be able to meet and to cope with any problem that they might meet with. There are quite a few of our people who do not know what our doctrine is. We should educate and train our young people in the way of doctrinal principles.

Respectfully submitted,

PLEASANT HILL CHURCH

Report of Committee on Nominations

We recommend that the next session of the Association convene with Piney Grove Church on Thursday and Friday before the third Sunday in October 1949. Bro. Rufus Hyman to preach the introductory sermon.

The Union Meeting to convene with Liberty Church, Bro. R. Johnson to preach the introductory sermon.

The next Sunday School Convention is to meet with St. John Church the fifth Sunday in May, 1949.

Happy Hill to be the home of the Ministers and Deacons' Meeting the fifth Sunday in August, 1949.

Submitted by PINEY GROVE CHURCH

After a busy morning the devotional hour was filled by Reverend Henry Chesnut, showing that sinless life is gained through Christ's Spirit. Rom. 8: 2-3.

The body adjourned for dinner until 1:30.

Friday Afternoon Session

Service opened with songs and prayers and an exhortation by Brother Rich to the assembly.

The moderator then called the Association to order for the hearing of reports.

Report of Committee on Finance

We, your committee on Finance, submit the following report. We find in the treasury:

For Minutes	\$44.00
Home Missions	27.28
Educational	28.70
Superannuations	25.31
Foreign Missions	23.31
Amount in Treasury	36.05

Total amount in treasury\$242.55

Submitted by HAPPY HILL CHURCH

Report of Committee on Obituaries

As we come to the close of another Associational Year, we would not fail to recognize our dead.

God, in His infinite love and mercy, saw fit to call from our midst these, our beloved brothers and sisters:

From Piney Grove—Rev. J. C. Carnley, an ordained minister, who departed this life on March 3, 1948. Sister Martha Ann Elizabeth Dearninger, who died on January 16, 1948. Sister Beatrice Owens, who died March 19, 1948. Rev. G. L. Shutes, who died Dec. 28, 1948. He was a worthy minister.

Blountstown—Sister Ella Starry, who departed from this life in 1948. Sister Elizabeth Pate, who passed away during the year of 1948.

St. Johns—Bro. W. D. Hewett, who departed from this life March 18, 1948; was born Nov. 18, 1870. Bro. J. W. Nelson, who was one of the oldest members of our church; departed this life at the age of 75 years.

Beulah—Sister Annie L. Champion, who died Jan. 2, 1948, who was an old, faithful member. She was born Nov. 21, 1862; was 85 years of age.

We bow our heads to His holy will and feel our loss is Heaven's gain.

Respectfully submitted,

Committee on Obituaries.

The ministers' reports were given, showing good examples of faith, loyalty and courage. Brother Rich has made a great effort in evangelistic work, also Brother Waters and Brother Mears in this field. We also appreciate the steadying influence of our elderly ministers who are always earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The date for the Sunday School Convention is fifth Sunday in May, 1949.

The date for Preachers and Deacons' Meeting is fifth Sunday in July, 1949.

Report of Committee on Resolutions

We, your committee on Resolutions, beg leave to make the following report: We recommend that the Association letter form be revised and the new form be sent to every church.

Submitted by **LIBERTY CHURCH**

Brother A. B. Nelson, Brother Martie Mears, and Brother Knight were appointed as committee to revise letter form.

Miscellaneous Business

Rev. A. B. Nelson made a talk on the plans of the Mission Board, which was interesting to all.

A motion was carried that the order of business of Church Conference be in minutes.

Board on Stewardship

Ernest Owen - D. Dykes - Vera Owen

Executive Committee

Bill George - D. Dykes - G. W. Owens - A. J. Pitts - D. J. Cook

Mission Board

A. B. Nelson - Ira Worthington - Early Peel - Loran Cook - Ernest Owen

The following officers were reelected for the next year:

Bro. John M. Rich, Moderator

Bro. Whitt Lawrence, Clerk

Resolution of Thanks

We, the delegates and messengers of this Association do sincerely thank the good people of St. John Church for the kindness and hospitality given us while among you. May your church grow and prosper in the Lord and your community be blessed.

Committees Assigned Churches For 1949

Finance—Poplar Head

Education—Coward's Creek

Auxiliary—Blountstown

Missions—St. John

Temperance—Liberty

Resolutions—Abigail

Stewardship—Beulah

Divine Service—Piney Grove

Nominations—Happy Hill

Order of Business

1. Introductory Sermon.
2. Call for corresponding letters and enrollment of delegates.
3. Call for petitionary letters.
4. Call for correspondence from sister Associations.
5. Assignment of committees to the churches.
6. Appointment of correspondents.
7. Reading the corresponding letters.
8. Hearing reports of committees.
9. Election of moderator and clerk.
10. Miscellaneous business.

Liberty Association's Ordaining Board

Daniel Walters A. B. Nelson J. H. Chesnut

Superannuation Board

R. Riley F. M. Knight W. R. Pipkin David Cook

Names of Ordained Ministers

A. B. Nelson	W. M. Duncan
J. M. Rich	Daniel Walters
A. H. Retherford	Martie Mears
J. H. Chesnut	Ruel Johnson

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 meetings 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 and 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 accordance with 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. Conferences 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 acknowledgements; 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 members 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 discussions in conferences 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 other 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 saints' 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.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. We believe in one true and living God; the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.—1st John 5:7.

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

3. We believe that in the beginning 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 this means brought on himself a miserable and mortal state, subject to death.—Romans 5:15; Genesis 2:17; 3:19.

4. We believe that no man is excepted from the graces of God made possible through Christ; but that all may believe unto salvation, or disbelieve unto eternal perdition.—John 3:16; Romans 1:16; 1st Timothy 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.—John 5:10; 2nd Tim. 3:16.

6. We believe that sinners are drawn to God, the Father, by the Holy Ghost.—Rev. 22:17.

7. We believe that good works are the fruits of faith and faith without work is dead.—Mark 1:15; James 2:17,22.

8. We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free and attainable to all mankind.—Matthew 11:28,29,30; Titus 2:11,12; St. John 12:32.

9. We believe commemoration and feet washing are ordinances of Christ and immersion only is baptism.—St. John 13:1-17; St. John 3:5; 1st Corinthians 11:23-32.

10. We believe that all Christians should unite in performing the sacred ordinances.—St. John 6:53-54; St. John 13:8.

11. We believe 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 adjusted 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 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 are 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 the 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. 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 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 from 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 anyone.

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 Chapt.) 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 shall 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 recognized 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.

STATISTICAL TABLE

Churches and Pastor	Clerks and Address										Meeting Days
		Baptism	By letter	Restored	Confession Faith	Total Received	Dism. by letter	Expelled	Died	Total	
Piney Grove—Rufus Hyman	Early Peel, Chipley Rt. 1.....	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	5	160	2nd & 4th Sun.
Liberty—Marty Mears	J. B. Bush, Chipley Box 211....	1	2	0	0	3	1	0	0	42	1st & 3rd Sun.
St. John—G. W. Nobles.....	W. R. Pipkin, Bonifay Rt. 1....	7	2	0	0	9	0	0	3	128	1st & 3rd Sun.
Beulah—A. H. Retherford	B. H. Champion, Graceville....	4	0	0	0	4	0	3	1	42	4th Sun.
Happy Hill—Martie Mears	Ruby Parish, Caryville Rt. 1..	1	4	0	0	5	2	1	0	13	2nd & 4th Sun.
Pleasant Hill—J. A. Pettis	Ethel Harrell, Bonifay Rt. 1....	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	53	4th Sun.
Cowart's Cr'k—Daniel Walters	J. C. Fowler, Dothan Rt. 3.....	1	0	0	4	5	3	0	0	166	1st Sun.
Blountstown—S. T. Shuites	Mrs. Joe E. Holley, Bl'tstown	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	67	3rd Sun.
Abigail—I. O. Cook	W. T. Morris, Vernon Star Rt.	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	19	2nd Sun.
Poplar Head—R. O. Johnson....	A. F. Squires, Bonifay Rt. 1....	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	67	1st Sun.