

MINUTES

OF THE

Annual Session

OF THE

Association of Freewill Baptists
CHURCH OF CHRIST.



HELD AT

MT. PISGAH CHURCH,

SCOTT COUNTY, ARK.,

AUGUST 8TH, 9TH AND 10TH, '94

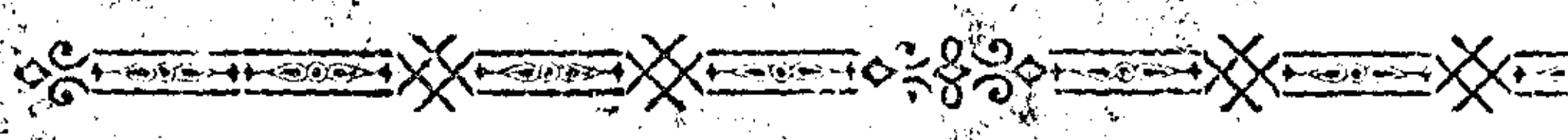
OFFICERS:

J. F. THOMAS, MODERATOR.

W. H. SMITH, CLERK.

THOS. F. SMITH, ASSISTANT CLERK.

J. H. LARAMORE, TREASURER.



MINUTES

OF THE

26th Annual Session

OF THE

Western Arkansas Association of Freewill Baptists

CHURCH OF CHRIST.

The 26th annual session of the Western Arkansas Association of Freewill Baptist Church of Christ met pursuant to adjournment on Saturday, August 18, 1894, with Mt. Pisga Church, Scott county, Arkansas. The introductory sermon was preached by Eld. J. F. Sessions from 105 Psalm, 18 and 19th verse, followed by F. M. Hollan, and prayer.

The Association was called to order by Moderator. Letters from different churches were called for and names enrolled of the following churches: Mt. Pisga, Kings Creek, Ouachita, New Hope No. 2, Friendship No. 2, Mazzard, Shady Grove, Pleasant Ridge, Edna, Mt. Zion, Macedona, Ross Creek, New Hope No. 1, and delegates seated.

The Association then proceeded to elect Moderator and Clerk, J. F. Sessions elected Moderator, W. F. Smith, Clerk, Thos. F. Smith, assistant clerk, J. H. Laramore, treasurer, and proceeded to business. The following committees were appointed:

Committee on Resolutions—Bros. Martin, Jackson, F. B. Adison, G. M. Hopkins.

Committee on Arrangement—Bros. J. P. Sims, D. W. Traylor, F. M. Hollan.

Committee on Sabbath Schools—Bros. J. H. Laramore, F. M. Hollan, Pinkney Morgan. The Association then adjourned until 5 p. m.

At 5 p. m. the Association met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Eld. B. C. Harris; petitionary letters called for and the following received: Pleasant Valley, Oak Grove, New Hope, Antioch. Delegates seated and the right hand of fellowship extended. Adjourned till Monday 8 a. m.

Preaching Saturday night by Rev. J. W. Yandell from 1st John 12:26, followed by Rev. James Redding.

Met Sunday morning, August 19th. Preaching by Rev. Henry Shuman from Hebrews 1:3. By order of Kings Creek church Bros. J. W. Yandell, and Henry Shuman was presented to the association.

The following presbytery was selected for ordination of J. W. Yandell, viz: F. M. Hollan, W. M. Mankin, L. G. Wilson, for Henry Shuman's presbytery, L. G. Wilson, M. R. Kennedy, B. J. Slate.

Preaching at 11 a. m. by M. R. Kennedy, from 2:12 of the Songs of Solomon, followed by Rev. B. J. Slate. At 4 p. m. preaching by Rev. L. G. Wilson from Romans 6:23, followed by Rev. R. E. Sessions. At 7 p. m. preaching by Rev. B. C. Harris from Psalms 133:1, followed by Rev. F. M. Hollan. Much love and good feeling was demonstrated throughout the day.

The Association met Monday Morning August 20th, 1894, pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Moderator. Resolved that we believe that the cause of not having greater success in the Free Will Baptist Church is that we do not support our pastors, they having to work hard through the week to support their families, having no time to study preaching only on Sundays unprepared; therefore be it

Resolved; That we do not call a preacher to preach unless we agree to see that his time is made good and to keep him on a level with the brotherhood.

Resolved; That we connect the essay written by Rev. W. M. Mankin on the subject of communion to our next

Petitionary letter received from Mt. Zion No. 2 and delegates seated and the right hand of fellowship extended.

Received the credentials from Bro. Chapman by order of last Association which was returned to him by him promising to make acknowledgments to Outchita church and failure thereof to be returned at next Association and from further evidence his credentials is immediately ordered back to the clerk of this Association, the association rescinding its act in returning its credentials to him.

Turned over to the treasurer for the printing of the minutes \$12.65.

We the committee on Sabbath schools indorse the action of the former committee by adding the word Union and that the former be annexed to the minutes.

Resolved that we hold our next Association with Mazzard Church, Sebastian county, embracing the first Sunday in September 1895, and Saturday before at 11 o'clock a. m., and that Rev. J. W. Yandell preach the introductory sermon on the doctrine, "Resolved That We Celebrate the Lord's Supper and the Washing of the Saints Feet."

We, the committee on temperance endorse the former report.

Moved and seconded that Bro. J. P. Sims superintend the printing of the minutes and the distribution of the same.

Motion carried that we tender our thanks to this community and more especially the sisters for their hospitality during our stay among them.

Adjourned to meet at time and place above mentioned, after which the parting hand was taken with great joy of having met and parted in peace, a time long to be remembered and never forgotten.

J. F. SESSIONS, Moderator.

W. H. SMITH, Clerk.

THOS. E. SMITH, Assistant

CONSTITUTION.

From long experience we, the members of the Free Will Baptist Church of Christ, being regularly organized upon the profession of our faith in Jesus Christ, and convinced of the necessity of a combination of churches to perpetuate union and a communion amongst us, and to preserve and maintain a correspondence with each other, do therefore ordain this constitution for our better church government.

1. The association shall be composed of members chosen by different churches in our union not exceeding three delegates from each church, and producing letters shall be entitled to a seat.

2. Letters from different churches are to express their number of fellowship, the number received by experience, letters of recommendation, the number dismissed, excluded, restored, and those who have died since the last Association.

3. The members thus chosen and convened to be denominated the Western Arkansas Association of Free Will Baptists, being composed of Sunday churches in the State of Arkansas, the Association to have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor to have any ecclesiastical power over the churches, reserving the right of withdrawing from any church becoming disorderly.

4. The Association to have a Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer, who are to be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.

5. Newly constituted churches may be admitted to the Association, which are to petition by letter and delegates, and if upon examination they are found to be orthodox and orderly, they may be received into the Association, the Moderator giving the right hand of fellowship.

6. No questions from any church shall come under the consideration of the Association, unless it has first been discussed in its own church.

7. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the Association, except it be withdrawn by the member who made it.

8. The Association is to endeavor to furnish the churches with minutes of the Association in proportion to the number of members in each church, the distribution being at the discretion of the Association.

9. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to keep a regular file of minutes of the Association on a book to be kept by the Association for this purpose.

10. The minutes of the Association shall be read, and corrected if needed, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the close of the Association.

11. Amendments to this constitution may be made when necessary by a majority vote of the members present.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

1. We believe in one true and living God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these three are equal in Divine essence, power and glory. Rom. 1:20; John 1:1.

2. We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament is the Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. 2 Tim. 1:16.

3. We believe that God created man good and gave him holy commandments, whereby he should live holy but man voluntarily disobeyed the commandments of God, transgressed the law and fell under the just condemnation of the same, whereby all mankind are sinners, not by constraint, but by choice, being partakers of the sinful nature attained by the fall, and that man is unable to save himself with his own power, but we see Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory that He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. Gen. 1:31; Heb. 2:9.

4. We believe that Christ, by his death, suffering and resurrection purchased our pardon and offers it freely to all mankind upon the principles of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He now commands all men everywhere to repent; therefore he saith: "Look unto me and be saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else Mat. 4:17; Isa. 45:22; Acts 20:22."

5. We believe that adult persons must be regenerated and born of the spirit of God if they inherit eternal life. John 3:3; Rom. 5:1-13.

6. We believe that infants and idiots are saved upon the merits of the son of God. Deut. 1:31; Jonah, 4:11.

7. We believe that all Christians should persevere in grace and be faithful to the end if they inherit eternal life, for blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates of the city. Rev. 22:14.

8. We believe that baptism by immersion is the apostolic mode, even the burial of the believer in water and that Christ who is our life, showed this noble example to His children and bid us walk therein. John 3:22, Mat. 3:16; Rom. 6:2-3-4-5; Mat. 28:19-20.

9. We believe that God in his goodness displays his power of Grace in a great degree, in calling and qualifying his servants by the teaching of the Holy Ghost and by the instruction of His blessed Word to go forth and proclaim life and salvation without price. He bids us freely to come and nothing prevents the salvation of any, but their own stubborn rebellion and sinful refusal to come. 1 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 3:7; Rev. 22:17.

10. We believe that baptism and the Lord's supper, and the washing of the Saint's feet, and the keeping of the Lord's day holy and abstaining from worldly pleasures and carnal cares, and to assemble our selves together is an ornament which prepares and beautifies the soldiers of the cross to march onward in the army of the Lord. Mat. 26:28, John 13:45; Ek. 20:8-4.

11. We believe that none have a right to baptism only those who have obtained a living hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and none have a right to administer the same only those who are called of God and have come under the hands of the Presbytery of Elders, and each church ought to have a pastor, deacon and clerk chosen by the church and continued in office during the good pleasure of the same, and in dealing with disorderly members, reference should be had to the 18th chapter of Matthew and other scriptures relative to dealing with disorderly members. In all cases a majority shall rule, except in receiving members, which shall be unanimous. Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 2 Cor. 6:6.

12. We believe it is the duty of each church to assemble together once a month, and that it is the duty of the pastor of the church when setting forth the Lord's supper and washing the Saint's feet to invite all Christians. Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 11:27-28.

13. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, of both the just and the unjust. The resurrection of the just to glory and immortality in the presence of God, the unjust to everlasting shame and banishment from the presence of God. Mat. 25:31-34; 1 Cor. 15:42-45; 1 Thess. 4:13-17, Rev. 20:10-21:19, Job 19:26.

FORM OF CHURCH LETTER TO THE ASSOCIATION.

State of Arkansas, County of..... Church to the Western Arkansas Association of Freewill Baptist Church of Christ, when assembled with..... Church.....County, Ark. GREETING: We send as delegates from our church Bros.....whom we pray you to receive to sit with you and aid you in your deliberations. [Add statistical report, state of religion, postoffice address, number of Fellowship, etc.]

Done in church conference .. 189.....

.....Clerk..... Moderator.

LETTER OF DISMISSAL.

This certifies that..... is a member of good standing of the Freewill Baptist Church of Christ at.....and as such we recommend him to the fellowship of God's people. [Done by order of the church conference .. 189.....

.....Clerk..... Moderator.

RULES OF ORDER.

1. At every sitting business shall be opened and concluded by prayer by the moderator, or whomsoever he may request.
2. Ministers present invited to seats are allowed to take part in the debate on all subjects, but not to vote.
3. Those who speak shall rise and address the moderator. Personal reflections shall be avoided in all debates.
4. No motion shall be discussed without being seconded.
5. When a motion has been made and seconded and a member opposes its discussion the moderator shall put the question: Shall this be discussed? If negative the question shall be dismissed.
6. If any proposition or motion under debate contains two or more points, it shall be divided at the request of any member and a vote taken.
7. Motions made and lost shall not be recorded.
8. No one shall speak more than twice on any subject without special leave of the moderator.
9. All questions decided by a majority of members present.
10. No member shall absent himself without special leave from the moderator.
11. Minutes shall be leisurely read and corrected before the close of the association if necessary.
12. In the future sessions of the association, arrangements shall be made so as to insure two or more sermons each day or other equivalent devotional exercises.
13. The rules of order shall be distinctly read from the chair immediately after the organization of the association.
14. Alterations may be made in these rules at any regular session of the association.

THE LAW OF THE SUPPER

The Lord's supper was instituted for God's people. They all have equal rights to the supper and that right is a birth right. For by one spirit are we all baptised into one body. (1 Cor. 12:13) This is not water baptism but spirit baptism. Again Christ says, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." (John 10:9) ~~He that entereth not by the door into the~~ sheep fold, but climbeth up some other way the same is a thief and a robber. (John 10:1) Christ is not water baptism and yet He is the door. There is but one door and Christ says He is that door, and he that cometh in at that door should have full fellowship and equal rights with all other christians. Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup, for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not to the church but to himself. It is a personal matter in judging and in eating.

The church that does judge and exclude any of God's people is not acting in keeping with the instructions given to the church at Corinth. To thus judge and exclude one of the children of God is to offend the child so judged and excluded. Now listen to Christ, "He that offends one of these little ones that believe in me it were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." (Mat. 18:6; 1 Cor. 10:30 31-32.)

It is contended that they of the same faith and order should be entitled to partake of the Lord's supper. I admit that true faith is the means by which men become christians. If this is what is meant by the same faith I shall not object. We are agreed, but if sect is to be inferred I do not object. As to order, if nothing but Gospel order is meant, very well; but I do not think that one child of God should dictate just what another should believe, or what church he should belong to in order that he may be in the right church, for the church is but an organic body of christians, and simply placing your name on the roll book of the best church on earth does not make you a christian neither will a like process in the worst church make a sinner. The Eunucho believed and was baptised. What church did he join? Here is faith and here is order. Now I ask if the Eunuch was to wish to commune with some of the churches would he be allowed the right? No, he is not of the same faith and order; yet he is admitted in heaven, but nay, he could not be admitted to a sectarian table. At the Lord's table all his people have a perfect right, be he whom he may, and when the supper is set and all of God's people are not invited it is not the Lord's supper but a sectarian supper, so we being many are

one body in Christ; and every member one of another. (Rom. 12:5.) And the way we became one body is by being baptised into that body, and of course this is by spiritual baptism. He that gets in by water baptism the same is a thief and a robber, and when any one gets into that body in a legal way has a legal right to all of the benefits and privileges of that body; for we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread. (1 Cor. 10:17.) By partaking we exhibit a oneness of that body. Who is meant by we? It certainly means all christians of all ages; when you come together take one for another; be of one mind, but let the word of God control the mind; if it had been intended by the Savior that the supper should be guarded as some attempt to guard it God would have endowed the judges with wisdom to discern the pure from the impure. But the standpoint from which they judge is water baptism and a legal administration of the same; so if baptised by emersion and a legal administration this settles the matter and christian character is left entirely out, by which some make a woeful mistake; for after all this precaution some have been found unworthy of the least of the privileges of any church. To admit emersion to be the only mode of baptism and a true believer receiving it is this not all right? Some would answer, if by a legal administrator. This is all that is wanting. Is it not a purely personal matter? If so he has been as truly baptised as any one. It is the duty of the preacher to baptise, and the applicant to be baptised. When this is done each have performed a personal duty. If I had never been baptised and had to wait till I found one whom I knew to be a legal administrator I would never be baptised at all as I cannot know the heart of man. Two acting in concert, one acting in good faith and the other not, the one is blessed and the other is not. Every christian is strictly responsible for his own acts and not for another's. Simon, the Samsover believed and was baptised, and that by a legal administrator, and yet it was discovered that he was not a christian. So we see that baptism by a legal administrator does not confer any claims upon him to any christian rights as this case proves it to be a personal matter; as we clearly see that the apostle did his duty and Simon did not, or vice versa. The apostle, inspired as he was did not discern the evil of Simon's heart, but if we can, we may know the heart of man, and we do our duty it is ours. When an applicant all are personal, and only accountable to God and not unto man. Various are the opinions of men and the way we account for them is in the capacity of men; and if we use of the capacity that God has given I do not think that we should be eternally condemned for what we cannot help. The church of Christ is divided into many members, but it is one spiritual body and Christ the head, and they should have the same love, care for the other as the natural body has for its members, yet they do not perform the same office yet they should all subserve the same interest of the body. Should christians all commune together at the Lord's table? I answer, what the Lord has joined together let no man put asunder.

We have something more than forty-three states in the Union. They are all equal, free and independent states and yet they are one union and have one great central point at which to meet and testify that they are free and independent states and yet but one nation. All christians should have one central point at which to meet and let the world know that they are one. Let that be at the Lord's table. Christians feel alike if they do not think alike. They can preach together, pray together, sing together and love together, and should they not commune together. And will they all meet at last at the same heavenly banquet table together. Then a union and a free communion is foretold upon us. Christ said at the last supper that he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine with us, till he drank it anew in his kingdom. Then all christians of all ages will sit around one communion table in heaven. As we find ourselves assembled thus around one Lord's table in heaven so should it be on earth.

ORDAINED MINISTERS:

B. C. Harris, F. M. Holland, W. M. Mankin, M. M. Swift, B. J. Slate, L. G. Wilson, Pinkney Morgan, M. R. Kennedy, C. G. Morgan, J. M. Lorrain, J. F. Sessions, R. E. Sessions, J. C. Hulsey, Henry Shuman, J. V. Yandell, J. D. Venable, James Reding, J. P. Silas, Thomas Jackson, Ross Yandell, J. Norris, O. N. Davis, J. M. Roberts, M. J. Snow, F. Dunn, D. Y. Bearden, J. N. Dearmon, W. M. Swafford, J. Barnhill.

AMOUNT FOR MINUTES
TOTAL MEMBERS
DIED
EXCLUDED
DISMISSED BY LETTER
RESTORED
RECEIVED BY LETTER
RECEIVED BY STATEMENT
REC'D BY EX. & BAPTISM

[illegible]