

MINUTES

—OF THE—

Twenty-Second Annual Session,

—OF THE—

Mt. Vernon Baptist Association.

HELD WITH THE

Salem Church,

Phillips County, Arkansas,

Saturday, Before the First Sabbath in October, 1878.

OFFICERS:

H. P. SLAUGHTER,	Moderator.
L. K. OBENCHAIN,	Clerk.

FORREST CITY,
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Proceedings.

SALEM CHURCH, PHILLIPS COUNTY, ARK. }
Saturday, October 5th. 1878. }

Pursuant to adjournment, the Mount Vernon Association met with the Salem Church. Eld. L. K. Obenchain, being previously chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, did so from the Gospel by Luke XXIV : 47.—“And that repentance and remission of sins be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” After preaching the Association was called to order by the Moderator, Deacon H. P. Slaughter; sang 5th hymn supplement of Southern Psalmist. Prayer by Bro. John Taylor.

Letters from the different churches were read by Eld's. B. F. Bartles, and J. W. Graham, whereupon the following messengers were enrolled :

Spring Creek.—H. P. Slaughter, W. D. Roane.

Forrest City.—J. Shackelford, B. F. Bartles, T. E. Prewitt, J. Taylor.

Iron Grove.—C. A. West, J. W. Langston, J. Q. Connell.

Forest Chapel.—Geo. P. Taylor, L. K. Obenchain.

Zion.—Eld. B. F. Thomas, Bro. M. J. Clay.

Hopewell.—J. James.

Salem.—W. J. Scaife, J. F. Jarrett, W. H. Henderson.

Oak Grove.—J. T. Pasley, R. J. Bickerstaff, W. H. Pasley.

Blackfoot.—S. H. King.

On motion, it was agreed to elect all the officers of this body by one ballot, which resulted in the choice of Deacon H. P. Slaughter Moderator; L. K. Obenchain, Clerk; Eld. W. H. Pasley, Treasurer; and Eld. B. F. Thomas, Corresponding Secretary.

Visiting brethren were invited to seat with us. Brethren Geo. B. Turner, and R. C. Davis were received from Bethel Church.

Committee on Religious Exercises was appointed by the Moderator, consisting of Brethren John Taylor, R. J. Bickerstaff, W. D. Roane, and the Deacons of Salem Church.

On motion, Eld. Jos. Shackelford, who had been previously appointed to preach the Missionary Sermon on Sabbath, at 11 o'clock, was requested to present the claims of Forrest City Baptist College, at the close of his discourse.

Committee on Religious Exercises reported Eld. B. F. Bartles to preach to night; Eld. Jos. Shackelford Sabbath at 11 a. m., and

Eld. B. F. Thomas, at 2 p. m.

On motion, it was agreed to adjourn until after religious services to-night. Sang 92nd hymn. Southern Psalmist. Prayer by Eld. L. K. Obenshain. Benediction by Eld. J. Shackelford.

Saturday night, 8 o'clock: After preaching by Eld. B. F. Barthes, from I Cor. XV: 58: "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord inasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." The Association met for the transaction of business.

Report on education before called for, the committee reported as follows:

EDUCATION

Your committee on education in your report in regard to it is necessary for your committee to make an urgent appeal to this educational body, to prove the importance of education. The necessity and utility of mental training for our youth is a admitted fact. Our sons and daughters should be educated in a matter of liberality and charity, but also matter of dignity. It is the duty of the welfare of our people and the respectability of their character depend upon the education and the enlightenment of the masses. If we would preserve our liberties we must educate the rising generation.

As a denomination, it is necessary to provide the means and appliances for the education of our young children, in order that we may have men fully able to defend our principles and preserve the truth, and meet them in the path of duty. As in which is to be present itself. While we believe that it is the duty of the church and the unlearned to preach the gospel, we should recall that it is within our power to give the rising generation all the advantages of a thorough and liberal education. We are in a position to demand it. Your committee would recommend that this Association raise a fund for the purpose of educating Ministers, and that a committee of three to be elected the committee on Ministerial Education, be appointed, which shall be to disburse said fund as they may deem best, or as they may be directed by this body. We have as a denomination expended much money and labor in rearing a suitable building at Forrest City, for educational purposes. Unfortunately, there is great danger that this building will be lost to us as Baptists if we do not make an earnest effort to relieve it from debt. Shall it be said of the Baptists of Mt. Vernon Association that they permitted the only educational institution belonging to the Baptists of Eastern Arkansas to be lost for the want of a few hundred dollars? We trust not. We need this institution and we should sustain it both by our patronage and our contributions. We urge upon the Association at this meeting to pay the institution out of debt. \$700 is needed to do this with what has already been raised. It will be a noble work for us to accomplish this at this season.

JOS. SHACKELFORD, Committee.
B. F. THOMAS.

On motion, the report on education was made the special order of business, on Monday at 10 o'clock.

On motion, it was requested that the committee on Domestic Missions incorporate in their report suggestions as to the best ways and means of supporting the ministry.

On motion, a committee was appointed to report on the subject of temperance at this meeting, viz: Elds. B. F. Thomas, Jos. Shackelford, and Brother S. H. King.

On motion, adjourned to meet Monday morning at 9 o'clock. Song "A charge to keep us have," etc. Prayer by J. F. Jarett. Benediction by Eld. B. F. Thomas.

SABBATH MORNING, 10 O'CLOCK.

The Sabbath School Convention, of the Mount Vernon Association that met pursuant to adjournment; was called to order by the Moderator at "Gathering Song," "We are coming blessed Savior," and prayer by Eld. W. H. Pasley. The subject of Sabbath Schools was introduced by Eld. B. F. Birtles, followed by Elds. W. H. Pasley, B. F. Thomas, and Jos. Shackelford. The Moderator appointed a committee to report on the subject of Sabbath Schools at the next meeting of the convention, consisting of Brothers S. H. King, J. F. Jarett, J. W. Graham, and Eld. B. F. Thomas to deliver an address.

On motion, the convention adjourned to meet on Sabbath at 9 o'clock A. M., during the next meeting of the Association.

SABBATH, 11 O'CLOCK, A. M.

As appointed, Eld. Jos. Shackelford, preached from Phillipians II: 14: "Holding forth the word of life," to a large and attentive congregation, with good effect; after which a collection was taken for Domestic Missions, amounting to \$11.90. He afterwards presented the claims of Forest City Baptist College, and the subscription for the liquidation of the debt of the institution was increased by \$200.00.

At 1 o'clock, p. m., Eld. B. F. Thomas, preached from the Gospel of John XII: 32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

A committee on religious exercises farther reported that Eld. Jos. Shackelford would preach a sermon to-night on the subject of conversion.

SABBATH NIGHT, 7 o'clock. As appointed, Eld. Jos. Shackelford preached a very interesting sermon.

Committee on Religious Exercises farther reported, that Eld. L. K. Graham, preach to-morrow at 11 o'clock.

MONDAY MORNING, 9 A. M.

The Association was called to order by the Moderator; sang 557 hymn, South Sea Psalmist, prayer by Eld. B. F. Thomas, roll called, minutes read, and approved.

Committee on finance was appointed, consisting of W. J. Scaife, M. J. Clay, and J. T. Pasley.

Standing committees were then appointed by the Moderator as follows:

On Sabbath Schools—S. H. King, B. F. Bartles, L. K. Obenchain
Education—Jos. Stackelford, B. F. Thomas, J. Taylor.

Missions.—W. H. Pasley, V. B. Izard, G. Taylor.

Report on Sabbath Schools being called for the committee reported as follows:

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Your committee on Sabbath schools would submit the following: Regarding the Sunday School as the nursery of the church, your committee is of the opinion that there is no department of christian labor (preaching the gospel being excepted), so productive of good to the church as the existence of Sabbath Schools, and it is with emotions of heartfelt sadness, we announce the fact that there has been, and still is so much apathy and indifference towards the subject. While the mind is young and tender, and while the youth of our country are able to claim the promise of scripture, "They that seek me early shall find me," and ere the evil days have come when the mind has received a firm and settled bias from long practice to working of iniquity—is the time for parents and christians to speak for Jesus. In order to do this most effectually, the most practicable way, is the organization of Sabbath Schools, conducted by christian men and women of experience, and whose primary and great object should be the conversion of all who enter the school. The reports of the different Churches generally evince the fact that where the Sabbath School is the most faithful are the greatest revivals of religion, and the Sabbath School pupils largely swell the number of converts. Brethren, the time for united, vigorous action has come—Romanism hurled from power, and shorn of its authority in the Old World, fastens its eyes upon the new, and openly boasts of its ability to wield the scepter of government and sway the destiny of our nation in the next thirty years. And how can this be accomplished? They themselves furnish the answer! "Through the children of the country." Already their numbers are largely on the increase—already the dark cloud is rising above the horizon, and the mutterings of its thunder are distinctly heard; and shall we be less foresighted than them? Shall we not seize upon this department, which in their hands forms such a tremendous power for evil, and with the blessing of God turn it into an instrument of good? Brethren, Baptists, to the rescue, and let us no longer neglect the means God has placed in our hands, but let us resolve that we will act in this matter, and that immediately, and continue to act until every church in our Association has established a Sunday School which shall be thoroughly Baptist in its teaching, and conducted by those who are neither afraid nor ashamed to speak for Jesus. We believe that the church was more constituted, whose duty it

was not to meet every Sabbath, for religious instruction and devotion. We believe it would be a step in the right direction, if we would in future, never recognize or constitute a church unless those proposing thus to be recognized would agree to adopt this rule of action. Did not the Apostolic churches meet together on the first day of each week for some religious purpose. In view of these facts and the great importance of the matter, we would recommend the adoption of the following :

RESOLVED, That this Association request and recommend that each Church immediately organize a Sunday School at its first meeting, and do it to its Church capacity, and that they persevere until every member becomes interested in the work.

JEFF T. PASLEY, Chairman.

After speeches by Elders W. H. Pasley, J. W. Graham, Jos. Shackelford, Brethren J. F. Jarrett, H. P. Slaughter and J. Taylor; after amendment was adopted.

Report on education was taken up, re-read and after speeches by Elders Jos. Shackelford, and B. F. Thomas; was adopted. A committee on ministerial education was appointed, consisting of Elders B. F. Thomas, Jos. Shackelford, and W. H. Pasley

Committee on temperance reported as follows :

TEMPERANCE.

Your committee on temperance beg leave to call the attention of this body to the importance of all philanthropists doing all in their power to oppose the use of ardent spirits as a beverage. The country is paying more for intemperance than all the taxes of the government. A large majority of the crimes of the country have their origin in intemperance. Our churches have more trouble from intemperance than any other cause. We never can put down drunkenness while we advocate and practice the moderate use of ardent spirits as a beverage. Any use of ardent spirits not for medicinal mechanical or sacramental purposes leads to intemperance. Therefore, resolved that every scriptural means should be used to stop the spread of intemperance. Respectfully submitted,

B. F. THOMAS, Chairman.

After an address by Elder B. F. Thomas, on motion was adopted.

The following resolution was offered by Eld. Jos. Shackelford :

RESOLVED, That the Pastors of each church in this Association be requested to present the claims of the Forrest City Baptist College to their congregations, October and November next, and take up a public collection for the same, and send to the Agent of the Board at Forrest City. On motion was adopted.

Committee on domestic missions reported as follows :

DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

Your committee of Home Missions, beg to submit the following :

That while great destitution still prevails within our bounds, yet the outlook is more encouraging than hitherto, that through the labors of our Missionary, regular preaching has been established at

Bible Union and Hopedale—and those churches are now in working order. Also through the labors of Brother Clark our State Missionary, the cause has been revived at Brinkley and Helena. Brother Wilson has also moved within our Association, and Brother Clark has been called to the care of the Helena Church.

We learn that several of our ministers are doing little or no preaching, otherwise the field would be tolerably well supplied, their excuse being that the churches fail to support them, and they are compelled to resort to secular pursuits, in order to support their families. How shall this state of affairs be remedied? We would recommend that three or four of our churches that are contiguous, unite and secure the services of some Minister, and settle him within their midst, and support him, that he might devote his whole time to the ministry. The gospel must be self-sustaining, for the great head of the church has commanded that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But the question arises how can this be done owing to the impoverished condition of the churches? We reply by having your Minister within your reach, each and every one can do something towards his support in the way of clothing or provisions; thereby blessing his hands, and rendering him efficient in the work of the Ministry. Our Ministers do not expect to be made rich, but do expect, and the Bible requires that they should receive a decent support. Brethren, the great fault is our lack of faith in our Blessed Redeemer—let us arouse ourselves, shake off our lethargy, put on the whole armor of Christ, and by the help of the Lord we can take possession of the field. All of which is respectfully submitted.

W. H. PASLEY,

L. K. OBENCHAIN,

} Committee.

After being discussed by Elders W. H. Pasley, B. F. Thomas and Brother S. H. King, on motion was adopted.

On motion, adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock.

11 o'clock A. M. Preaching by Elder L. K. Obenchain, from Matthew XI: 28:—"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

2 o'clock P. M. The Association assembled, was called to order by the Moderator. Sang, "When I can read my title clear."

On motion the following were appointed as Trustees of Forrest City Baptist College: V. B. Izard, L. K. Obenchain, John Taylor, Jos. Shackelford, J. W. Beck, A. L. Grady, W. H. McDaniel, H. P. Slaughter, W. H. Pasley, A. G. Jarman, Geo. H. Sanders, R. P. Davant, J. W. Wynne, J. B. Hodges and R. H. Sparkman.

Corresponding messengers were next appointed.

Mount Zion Association.—Elders B. F. Bartles, Jos. Shackelford, L. K. Obenchain.

Grand Prairie.—R. J. Bickersstaff, H. P. Slaughter.

Big Hatchie, Tennessee.—B. F. Thomas.

State Convention.—Jos. Shackelford, B. F. Thomas, W. H. Pas-

ley, M. J. Clay.

On motion it was agreed to hold the next meeting of this body with the Helena Church.

On motion, in case of an epidemic at Helena, the Moderator was authorized to designate some other place for the next meeting of this body.

Offered by Eld. B. F. Thomas; Resolved, That the thanks of this body be offered to the Salem Church and community, for their kind hospitality in entertaining this body. Adopted.

On motion, the churches were requested to send Sabbath School statistics in their letters.

On motion, Elder Jos. Shackelford was chosen to preach the introductory sermon at the next meeting of this body, Elder W. H. Pasley, Alternate.

NOTICE.—I hereby give notice that at the next meeting of this body I will offer a resolution to change the time of meeting to Friday.

B. F. THOMAS.

On motion, the present executive board was continued.

FINANCE.

Committee on finance reported as follows:

We, your committee on finance, would submit the following report:

Received for Minutes,.....	\$ 23 50
Received for Missions,.....	21 65
Public Collections,.....	11 90
Amount Pledges Unpaid,.....	43 75
Amt. Received for Bro. Bartles from Bro. W. D. Roane.	1 25

JEFF T. PASLEY, Chairman.

On motion the clerk was allowed ten dollars for his services from the Associational fund.

Offered by Elder J. W. Graham:

RESOLVED, That we recommend to the patronage of this Association the Western Baptist and Baptist as faithful exponents of Bible doctrine; and Kind Words as a suitable paper for our Sunday Schools, and that we do all in our power to secure for them a large patronage. Adopted.

On motion, after an interesting address by the Moderator, and singing a parting hymn, the Association adjourned to meet with the Helena church, Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1879. Prayer by Brother John Taylor; Benediction by Eld. B. F. Thomas.

H. P. SLAUGHTER, MODERATOR,

Spring Creek, Lee county Ark.

L. K. OBENCHAIN, CLERK, Forrest City, Arkansas.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

CHURCHES	NAMES OF MESSENGERS	POST OFFICE	PASTORS	Baptized	Kept by Letter	Dis. by Letter	Restored	Excluded	Dead	Total	Contributions for Minutes	Mission Fund	Preaching
First District.													
Cypress Valley	Not Represented												
New Hope No. 3	Not Represented	Rev. W. H. Spicer											
Oak Grove	J. T. Pasley, R. J. Bickelstaff, W. H. Pasley, Mora		W. H. Pasley	5	6		2	2	96	3 00			1st Sa
Salem	W. J. Seale, J. F. Jarrot, W. H. Henderson, Marvel						5	3	47	2 50	75		
Spring Creek	H. P. Slaughter, W. D. Roquet	Spring Creek	" "	1	1			1	39	2 00			
New Hope	Not Represented												
Helena	Not Represented												
Blackfoot	S. H. King	Barton	No Pastor					1	11	5 00			
Second Dist.													
Ash Grove	D. H. Gideon, J. T. Caplaner	Cotton Plant	W. M. Raper	4	6		6	5	85	2 50	5 00		
Philadelphia	Not Represented												
Shiloh	Not Represented												
Pine Fork	Not Represented												
Bethlehem	Not Represented												
Cherokee	Not Represented												
Union Grove	C. A. West, W. Langston, J. Q. Connell	Holly Grove	J. W. Graham			11	2	2	40	1 00	4 40		
Bethel	G. R. Turner, R. C. Davis no statistics	Poplar Grove											
Mt. Gilman	Not Represented												
Third District													
Forrest City	G. P. Taylor, L. K. Obenchain	Forrest City	W. H. Praley	4	2	10	1	4	2	96	2 00	3 50	2d Sab
Zion	B. F. Thomas, M. J. Clay, J. Taylor			1				2	1	18	50	25	
Forrest City	Jos. Shackelford, B. F. Bartles, T. E. Prew		Jos. Shackelford	2	4			5	5	105	3 00	7 75	ev and
Hopewell	J. James	Palestine	L. K. Obenchain	1	3			2	1	24	2 00		
Boyle Grove	Not Represented	Forrest City	L. K. Obenchain										
Total				15	12	33	3	26	29	561	23 50	21 65	