

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

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## Thursday Morning, October 1, 1998

The Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists convened in its 146<sup>th</sup> annual session with Blue Springs Church, Hiltons, Virginia.

The exact date and location of the original Blue Springs Church is unknown. The name Blue Springs came from its previous location. Most residents of this community refer to the present church as Beech Grove, which was the name established for the public school and Methodist church.

The first building at the present location was destroyed by a cyclone in 1910. The existing building was erected in 1911. A public school was housed in it until 1932-33, and the Methodists shared the building until the late 40's when they were dropped from the circuit.

Blue Springs was the home church for Elder Thomas Carter, former moderator of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists. Other pastors include Elder Bobby Carter, who organized and pastored Gardner's Chapel Church for many years, John Gardner, Lucian Lane, Josh Sanders, Kermit Harper, G. A. Minton, Gerald Hopkins, Bobby Vermillion and our current pastor, John Bowlin.

Great revival services have been conducted with many souls being saved. In 1946, Elder Lucian Lane was inspired to come to the church for a revival. Many souls were saved and united with the church. In 1959, Rev. Radar Ketron and Rev. Coba Carter conducted a great revival which lasted 32 nights and 79 souls were saved during these services.

Elder John R. Gardner served as pastor for the longest period of time. His instruction to us will remain in our hearts throughout the years to come. His first message was from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, 15 (Be Ye Steadfast and Unmovable). His long ministry was concluded with a most inspiring text using Faith, Hope and Charity as a message.

The loss of Elder John Gardner and Elder Bobby Vermillion was very difficult for the church to overcome. However, we have a current membership of 96 and although we are few in number, God is blessing us in spirit, which inspires us to earnestly contend for the faith.

The first day of this great gathering began as God's children were greeted with an abundance of beautiful sunshine and warm, friendly smiles. There is nothing better in this life than to meet together with God's children to worship Him in truth and in spirit. The Lord's presence was evident all over the grounds. As the congregation assembled in the tent, Sister Zula McCullough led them in singing several songs of praise to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It won't be very long until we'll lay these burdens down and joy unspeakable and full of glory will fill our hearts as we enter that haven of rest.

Our Father waits to prepare us a dwelling place in that land that is fairer than day. In the sweet by and by we'll meet on that beautiful shore to offer our tribute of praise to the one who shed His blood that we might have eternal life. Guided by the unseen hand, we can smile at Satan's rage and face a frowning world.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone to the service and thanked God for providing us the privilege to meet again in such a wonderful place. He called to the congregation's attention the passing of three of our preaching brethren since we last met. These are: Elders George Mendenhall, Johnny Sykes and Hobart Hall. These dear brethren devoted their lives to the Lord's work. They stood firm in the word of God and preached His word all over this country. We are saddened at their passing, but we know and realize they are at rest with the One they preached about for so long. Please remember their families in your prayers.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Religious Exercises which includes: Steve Minton (chairman), David Smith and J. T. Caudill.

Elder John Henry Sybert came forward and explained how the hymn "Brethren, We Have Met Again," written by Elder I. S. Robinette, evolved into becoming our standard. He then led the congregation in singing this great song of praise.

Prayer requests were made for the lost everywhere, Carl Smith's family at the loss of his mother-in-law, Joe Hensley, Clarence New, Nannie Wallen, Pam Baker, Madge Canter, Lois Davenport, Jim Burke, A. D. Howington's wife and son, and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Greg Hill led us to the throne of grace with a most humble prayer.

Elder Lucian Lane blessed us with his testimony and song. He thanked God for the blessing of just being able to be here. We are many times saddened and broken hearted by the things of this life, but God's grace is sufficient in all things. We have been waiting on the shore, so long we've traveled, our steps are getting slow, but thanks be to God we won't have to travel any more, for some day soon our wait will be over and we'll be home with the Lord. Brother Lane is 2 months from his 97<sup>th</sup> birthday, and we thank God for his life and his dedication to the Lord's work. We pray that God will continue to bless him for many years to come.

Elder John Bowlin, pastor of the host church, came forward to welcome everyone to Blue Springs. He led the congregation in singing about the model church. Let the Lord be your guide and He will not only make you feel welcome, but He will richly bless you. Having been chosen to preach the introductory sermon, he read from II Kings 2:9-14 and used as his thought "Where is the Lord God of Elisha?" We can't hide anything from God. By His stripes we are healed, we are alive and alive forevermore. We must draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to us and deliver to us that double portion. Just like Joshua did, let us declare that as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. No one can come unto the Father unless he be drawn, for salvation will allow us to live and die in the Lord. Elder A. D. Howington, the alternate,

followed with another wonderful message from the Lord. The same spirit that spoke to Elisha is the same spirit that speaks to us. For by one spirit we are all baptized into the same body. Faith can't stand in the wisdom of man, but only in the power of God, for He is the way, the truth and the life. That same spirit is within all God's children, and if we will just obey it, He will bless us in a mighty way. These men preached so wonderfully to us and showed us where the Lord God of Elisha is. He is here with His children in everything we do and say.

The congregation was adjourned for lunch with the singing of Amazing Grace.

## **Thursday Afternoon, October 1, 1998**

Songs of Zion rang out from the tent as everyone gathered inside after a wonderful lunch served by the host church. Shouts of praise and glorious testimonies were made in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. When we can assuredly say that we're on the rock at last, then our feet have found a resting place where He whispers sweet peace to us. The place is not of importance in this life, because anywhere is home sweet home if Christ our Lord is there.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone back and thanked the host church for the bountiful lunch. We were further blessed with the singing and testimonies from the Clear Springs Church singers. Weep not friends, for we're going home on a flight without an airplane.

The report from the Committee on Religious Exercises was read by the moderator.

Stand tonight: Neal Drinnon and others in attendance.

Liberty Chapel: Delmas Harris, Jerry Johnson, Willie Lampkin and Roger Trent.

The moderator also announced the beginning of several revivals at various churches. These include:

Riverside, to begin on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> with Fred Gilreath;

Long Hollow, to begin on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday night in October with Eckel Head and Bazzle Manis;

Cadet, to begin on Sunday before the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in November with Eckel Head and Paul Strong.

Prayer requests include all those made this morning, the unsaved, Sisters Ora Arnott, Ruth Fields and Beulah Webb, and the man in Titusville, Florida. Elder Hasco Jenkins took our petitions to the Lord in a most humble prayer.

Brother Billy Jack Johnson, chairman of the Committee on Church Letters, now reports 67 churches of which they recommend accepting. It was motioned, seconded and voted to accept the recommendations of the committee and seat those delegates duly elected or appointed by their respective churches as the voting body of the association.

The delegation was seated in order to transact the business.

Elder Sizemore asked for nominations for a moderator pro-tem to serve during the election of the association officials. Elder John Arnott was nominated. It was motioned, seconded and voted for him to serve during the election. Elder Arnott thanked the delegation for their confidence in him just before the election.

Brother Danny Lawson was nominated to serve as clerk and treasurer. It was motioned, seconded and voted for him to serve as clerk and treasurer for the ensuing year.

Elder Terry Sizemore was nominated to serve as moderator of the association. No other nominations were made and it was motioned, seconded and voted for Elder Sizemore to serve as the moderator of the association for the year.

Elder Sizemore, speaking for himself and the clerk, thanked the delegation for their prayers and their confidence. It is truly an honor to serve this group of people. He also asked them to continue praying for them that the Lord's work would always be first and foremost in everything we do.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the moderator to appoint any and all committees. The moderator then appointed the following committees:

Committee on Church Letters: Joe Robinette (chairman), Burnice Sybert, Wayne Morgan and Bradley Bowen (alternate).

Committee on Newly Constituted Churches: Ministers – J. H. Sybert (chairman), Woodrow Fields, Bobby Carter; Deacons – Morris Giles, Edgar Neeley; Laymen – Jack Osborne and Gleason Storie.

Committee on Finance: Oscar Irvin (chairman), Eckel Head and David Jerrell.

Committee on Obituaries: Hasco Jenkins (chairman), Delmas Harris and Donny Clifford.

Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries: John Arnott (chairman), Gale Derrick, Bob Brown, Lewis Baker, Arry Hickman, Fred Gilreath and Lucian Lane.

Elder Sizemore brought to the attention of the association several items and questions that needed to be addressed by the delegation. These include:

Should the "Look Into The Past" segment continue to be printed in the minutes? It was motioned, seconded and voted to continue printing the segment in the minutes as in years past.

The clerk reported on the association finances for the past year. He also asked the delegation if it would be suitable with everyone to apply for a tax exempt number for the association in order to keep from having to pay taxes on all our purchases. The association voted to allow the clerk to apply for the tax exempt number.

Brother Delmer Wallen, Sr., chairman of the Committee on Insurance, reported that the insurance obtained last year was done so with a very reputable company and at a good premium price. Therefore, it was recommended to keep the insurance that had been obtained earlier. It was motioned, seconded and voted to accept the recommendations of the committee. After the report was given, the committee was dismissed.

It was agreed by the delegation not to print directions to the moderator's home nor to the clerk's home, but instead to list a voice-mail phone number for the moderator to help people get in touch with him as needed.

The clerk informed the delegation that an updated inventory of the tent, chairs, stands, etc. and all kitchen items was needed for insurance purposes. These must be taken care of before these items are transported to the new host church. While the new host church for 1999 should be involved along with the current host church, the moderator asked for any other volunteers to notify him or the clerk.

A question was asked about the need to revise and reprint the booklets containing Directions to the Churches. After much discussion, it was motioned, seconded and voted for the clerk to use his own judgement to determine the best procedure for updating, reprinting and determining how many books to print.

The business being concluded, the delegation was dismissed until Friday morning, October 2, 1998.

## **Friday morning, October 2, 1998**

Once again the Lord poured out His blessings on His children as they gathered for the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the 146<sup>th</sup> annual session. The cool morning air was warmed by the beautiful sunshine as God filled our hearts with His wonderful love. Sisters Zula McCullough and Naomi Atkins led the congregation in singing several songs of praise while everyone assembled in the tent. There will be no tear dimmed eyes in that land where we'll never grow old, for all will be peace and joy. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, let us give one another a helping hand as we stand for God's word. Cherish the old rugged cross, for we'll exchange it some day for a crown.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone to today's service and thanked Almighty God for His blessings on us. He has been so good to us and blessed us in ways that this old world knows nothing about. He reminded the ministers, along with visiting ministers, to sign the book at the clerk's table. Elder Sizemore also thanked the host church for the wonderful job they are doing in caring for this grand body. He brought to the attention of the congregation two more minister's names that had passed from our ranks since last year. These are: Elders Elmer Kincer and Ollie Lawson. Let us remember the families of these dear servants of God in our prayers.

While we were experiencing some problems with the new PA system, Elder Carl Lawson came forward to explain some things about the new system. He thanked the delegation for agreeing to purchase the new PA system last year. While it is new to us, he asked the congregation to be patient while we learn more about it and work through any problems that may come up. The committee checked and compared systems from Abingdon, Virginia to Nashville, Tennessee. It was decided that the best deal was from a business located in Nashville. We thank Bob Brown for all his work in helping us to obtain the new system. We also thank Charley Johnson for all his help to the committee while they were searching for the PA system. To help get through the PA problem, Elder Sizemore blessed us with a song. Some day soon the Lord will return on a cloud to gather his children home. He didn't come here to stay, just to show us the right way.

Prayer requests include all those made in earlier services, Lloyd Watkins, Elder Isaiah Purkey, Carrie Skeens, Henry Wheeler's wife, Bill Bowlin, Mary Ethel Johnson, Myrt Worley's wife, Jim Burke, Ruby Lambert, Shane Russell and his manager and a host of unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Most of all we pray for the lost, not just here at this service and in this community, but all over this land and country. Elder Jason Robinette took our petitions to the Lord.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to adopt the business proceedings of yesterday as read.

Elder Fred Gilreath, having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, came forward to take the first part of the service. He read the 58<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah and used as his thought a portion of the 12<sup>th</sup> verse "and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." We are the light of the world, but we cannot glory in the things of man. We must follow the straight and narrow way of God. When our brothers and sisters weep, we must weep with them, when they cry, we must cry with them, and when they pray, we must pray with them. God's way is still a repenting way. There is no straddling the fence, we are either on God's side or we are on Satan's side. We must strive with everything that is within us to bridge the gap that Satan has worked to put between us and the Lord. Laborers are few and dwindling more each day, so we must work harder so

the harvest will be gathered in. Elder Eckel Head followed with another message from on high. The Lord is ever present with us, so let us be ever dedicated to Him and His work. Our daily testimony and walk with God will find us out if we are not walking according to His will. Our walk is 365 days a year, not just 3 or 4 days in October. We must get our house in order and quit worrying about every one else's affairs. Let us ask God for leadership in this life and listen and obey Him when He speaks to us. It is easy to love one another with mere words, but we must love one another in deed. These men preached heaven down, truly a message from God. His blessings are so real and serve to strengthen and encourage us. Thank God for these men and for all the blessings He has bestowed upon His children.

As shouts of praise rang throughout the tent, we were adjourned for lunch with a song and fellowship, one with another.

### **Friday Afternoon, October 2, 1998**

After a delicious lunch served by the host church, the afternoon service resumed with singing, shouting and praising our blessed Redeemer. Oh the joy of that glad meeting when the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and we'll meet just inside the eastern gate! We were truly blessed by special singing and uplifting testimonies from the West View singers, Bowlin family, John Henry Sybert, Henry Wheeler, Riverside Quartet and Jason Robinette, Naomi and Reed Atkins, and Kellis Smith.

When our labor and toils are finished here, we'll exchange them for a mansion just waiting for us where we will live on and on throughout eternity. The fountain that frees us from sin is filled with His great love. We've started on a journey toward heaven and by His marvelous grace we mean to go through. There is a beautiful home for you and for me where we can rest by the peaceful river in the presence of our Savior. I want to go to that city not made with hands where we will praise Jesus the long ages through. The hand that hung this old world can heal the broken, sin sick heart. He paid the ultimate price when He shed His precious blood on the old rugged cross for you and for me.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone back from lunch and thanked God for His blessings. God doesn't do things in a little way. He never gives us just enough to get by, but He always provides more than enough for His children. We are truly a blessed people. When you think there is no way that the Lord could possibly bless any more, He pours out a double portion on His children. His blessings are indeed exceedingly abundant to those that love and serve Him.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, Angela Johnson Mitchell, all those made in earlier services and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Leon Ritchie took our petitions to the Lord.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

The moderator read the report from the Committee on Religious Exercises:

Stand tonight: Bill LaFollette and Lewis Baker.

Poplar Grove: John Turner and Hasco Jenkins.

Liberty Chapel: Kenny Mitchell and Eckel Head.

Stand, Saturday morning, October 3, 1998: John Henry Sybert, John Arnott and James Jarnigan.

The Committee on Newly Constituted Churches reported that none had been received.

The Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries reported that none had been received.

Elder Oscar Irvin, chairman of the Committee on Finance, reported \$4,617.75 in receipts for the year.

Elder Hasco Jenkins, chairman of the Committee on Obituaries, reported that 61 had been received at this time.

Brother David Horton was chosen to read the circular letter. Its message is to each and every one of us. It warned us of how the pleasures of this life and Satan's many devices are stealing our people from the church. We must insure that the many things of this world don't make us complacent when it comes to doing God's work. It is very easy to get caught up in the things of this world and put the Lord's work off. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, never forsaking the assembling of ourselves together to worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. These men put together a wonderful circular letter and it would behoove us all to read, understand and put it to practice in our lives. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print it in the minutes as read.

Elder Sizemore appointed 3 preaching brethren to prepare the circular letter for 1999. They are: Elders Roger Trent, Jason Robinette and James Jarnigan.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to have all things which are standard printed in the minutes.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the clerk \$850 in appreciation for his services.

It was motioned, seconded and voted that the host church will be responsible for the maintenance of the kitchen, with any needed repairs to be paid for by the clerk of the association.

It was motioned, seconded and voted that the following committee oversee the association electrical and PA systems: Elder Carl Lawson (chairman),



Elder Howard Sybert, Brothers Scott Mellons, Bobby Caudill, Delmer McPherson, Roger Smith and Danny Lawson.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the clerk to replenish the necessary forms to properly perform his duties.

The clerk gave a follow-up report of his findings on the reprinting of the Directions to the Churches books. It was motioned, seconded and voted for the clerk to print 1,000 books and for each church to send a recommended donation of \$1.00 for each direction book they request to cover the printing expenses.

Elder A. D. Howington brought it to the attention of the delegation that since our ordained ministers are considered public officials, they could be sued in a court of law if they refuse to marry two women or two men as evidenced in a recent court case in another state, but reported in a local newspaper. While our association follows the King James version of the Bible, which does not condone any action of this type, the laws in some states allow this. The delegation was asked to consider whether we should seek legal council on this matter or add something in our minutes to help protect our ministers from any legal actions against them should they ever be faced with this situation. It was motioned, seconded and voted to table this item of business for the time being and proceed with the other business at hand.

There were a total of 7 churches that asked for the association to meet with them in 1999. One of these withdrew before the plea process leaving: Beech Grove, Burke's Union, Clear Springs, House Chapel, Roller's Chapel and West View. After the plea process was completed, all of the churches withdrew in favor of Roller's Chapel. This is an excellent example of how the Lord can work in our midst when we put aside everything and obey His Holy Spirit. It was evident that the Lord sent the association to Roller's Chapel, where the Lord willing we will convene on Thursday morning (September 30) before the first Saturday in October, 1999. Introductory – Elder Greg Hill; Alternate – Elder Allen Hensley.

Adjourned until Saturday morning, October 3, 1998.

### **Saturday Morning, October 3, 1998**

Just like the previous two days where the blessings of the Lord were exceedingly abundant, this day would be no different. The Lord continued to bless as everyone gathered inside the tent for today's special memorial service. The congregation, led by Sister Zula McCullough, joined together to sing several old hymns of praise to the Lord. Very soon now there will come an uncloudy day when the redeemed of the Lord will fly away home. Sister June Kail blessed us with her wonderful testimony and song. Jesus has prepared us a resting place that some call heaven, but we just call it home.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone to our memorial service today. He thanked God for His wonderful blessings on His children. Spiritual blessings from God are a miracle to His children, but they do not stop there. They are not only spiritual in nature, but take any form required to help the children of God. He has so richly blessed His children during this association in every possible way imaginable.

Prayer requests include all those made during previous services, the lost all over this land and country, our nation that it might look to the Lord, Lon and Ovie Wallen, Beulah and Cassell Caudill, Junior Collier, Angela Mitchell and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Brother Pleas Lawson led us to the throne of grace.

The moderator sang a song to remind us of that happy glad morning when we shall see Jesus face to face. With all the heavenly host we'll sing, oh how heaven will ring with the voices of the redeemed of God. What a day that will be when our Jesus we shall see. Elder John Robinette blessed us with his testimony of praise to the Lord.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

The moderator read the report from the Committee on Religious Exercises:

Stand tonight: Allen Hensley and Frank Mullins.

Poplar Grove: Roger VanHoose and Bill VanHoose.

Liberty Chapel: Hasco Jenkins.

Roller's Chapel: Jerry Johnson.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to adopt the business proceedings of yesterday as read.

Elder John Bowlin, pastor of the host church, came forward and blessed us with a song. 'Tis so sweet to tell the story of Jesus. He thanked God for moving all the obstacles to make ready for this blessed event. He thanked everyone for coming, and all the individuals who helped and contributed in so many ways to help this gathering of the association. He presented a tee shirt to Elder John Henry Sybert in honor of his devotion to this association over the years and for his upcoming birthday on Monday. He also presented a tee shirt to Elder A. D. Howington for all his help to the church and for just being there when they needed him. Elders Sybert and Howington thanked the delegation and most of all God for allowing them the privilege to serve this grand old body. Brother Jim Bowlin, of the host church, came forward to thank the association for allowing Blue Springs to serve them and God for all the miracles and blessings He bestowed on them.

The moderator spoke to the association and asked them to promote the association in all our churches during the next year. We need to strengthen and encourage others to take an active part in the association so the Lord can

use them for His glory. Our young people need to be made aware of what this grand old body of God's people represents. They need to see how the Lord will bless His children when they obey Him. While the preaching brethren have a good opportunity to do this, it is not just up to them. We all need to promote the association and encourage others to be a part of this blessed event.

The moderator also informed the congregation that a trip to Israel is being planned in 1999. Anyone interested in this should contact either Elder Bob Brown or Brother Delmer Wallen, Sr. They have brochures and other information about the trip for those that are interested. It would be a wonderful trip when you can make it with several of God's people.

It was also noted that one of the stoves in the kitchen had given the ladies a lot of problems this year and that it would probably have to be replaced before next year. Some flooring and one of the seals around the serving doors in the kitchen would also need to be repaired. The moderator asked that all the churches take into consideration these types of things and consider the TOTAL cost of the association when they send in their contribution next year. Also, it is a good idea to send any money to help the host church as early as possible so they will have a better idea of how much help they are going to receive.

The clerk read the resolution of thanks he had prepared. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print it in the minutes as read.

The names of those dear departed saints that have gone on to their reward were read by the moderator as part of the memorial service which has been carried on since 1956. We miss them dearly, but we realize they are at rest with the Lord.

Elder John Henry Sybert was chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises to take the first part of the service. He read I Peter 1:1-12 and I John 3:1-2 and used as a thought "The sons of God." The full love of God can never be told in this lifetime. Nothing could please a child of God more than to know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The years are swiftly passing, how precious is the promise that we will be at home with Jesus. Elder John Arnott took the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the service and was blessed of God to deliver another wonderful message from on high. It is good that we remember these dear departed saints, for it pleased God to instruct us in remembrance. The Lord's way is full of peace and joy. Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we might be called the sons of God. Elder James Jarnigan took the last part of the preaching service and blessed us with another wonderful message from God. We have much to brag about in the Lord, we are saved and on our way to glory, to live with our blessed Redeemer forever. If heaven wasn't any better than this, I would still want to go there. Our hope and desire is to see other souls saved, that they too could share this blessed hope that God so freely gives. We must love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and likened unto that, love our neighbor as ourself. These men were used of the Lord as they preached so wonderfully.

With shouts of praise, tears of joy and just all around worship of our Savior, the Lord once again poured out His blessing until our cups were full and running over. His children put aside the cares of this old world and obeyed the Lord, for which they were so richly rewarded. Oh what a Savior we have, bless His holy name!

We were adjourned until Sunday morning, October 4, 1998.

## **Sunday Morning, October 4, 1998**

Still rejoicing from the abundant blessings of the Lord in the previous services, God's children gathered together for the last service of this association. Sister Zula McCullough and Brother Steve Minton led the congregation in several songs of honor and praise to our Savior. Man's work here in this life will soon decay, but Jesus has prepared a resting place for the saved of God and it won't be very long until He shall appear to take us home. We must hasten to Him, the One who redeemed us from our sins. The unseen hand of God will lead us through the ways we do not know and take us to that land where sin and sorrow cannot come.

Elder John Bowlin, pastor of the host church, welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming this way. He also thanked God for His presence and His blessings during these services. Sister Brenda Bowlin thanked all the ladies and men that had helped the church in so many ways to host this grand company of God's children. Those that cooked, cleaned, served, etc. and the ones that parked the cars, picked up the trash, moved the tables, etc. and the children that served the drinks. Whatever the job was, God richly blessed those that helped in any way. Through all the hard work that has been accomplished, it has been a blessing to serve the people of God.

Prayer requests include all those in previous services, Myrt Worley's wife, and a host of others. Brother Ralph Baker led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

We were further blessed with special singing from Brote Smith, Burnice Sybert, Jim Bowlin and Jean Wilson. We live in a house made of clay, but the Lord has built for us a home that is eternal. Elder John Henry Sybert blessed us with his song of just how great our Jesus is. His exceedingly abundant blessings cause our soul to sing, "my Savior God to thee, how great thou art!" Some day soon Christ will come with shouts of acclamation to take His children home.

We were blessed once again to have several ministers in attendance at today's services. These men preached a message from heaven which truly blessed our souls. The 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of I Timothy was read and the thought was "The spirit speaketh expressly." The spirit of God doesn't speak just to the preacher, but to each of us as lay members. The Holy Spirit must not be taken lightly. We must listen and obey when it speaks to us expressly. All of

us cannot preach the gospel, but we all must minister to those around us. By our example we can help win souls to Christ. We can't build anything in this lifetime that can stand, unless it is built on the foundation of the Lord. We have to stand for the Lord, for He will not lead us in any way that is not backed up by His word. As we are faced with situations where we don't know what to do, let us seek the counsel of God and He will show us the right way to go.

These men preached wonderfully to us from the word of God. After some wonderful testimonies, Sister Peggy Sizemore led the congregation in singing about the old ship of Zion as we were dismissed until next year. Our prayer is that God will bless each of our churches with many souls being saved.

Needless to say this has been a glorious week. My cup has been running over the entire time. I wish I had the words to say to the world to fully express what has happened here during this meeting. Many have said that the association just gets better each year. I don't fully understand all of it, but I have to agree. It may be we are getting a little older and we appreciate it more, but I believe the main reason is because God's children forgot the cares of this world and obeyed the Holy Spirit of God. Look around us at just what He has done for His children. If we will continue to obey Him, He can and will use each of us in a mighty way. You people mean more to me than I can put into words. Your help, kind words of appreciation and most of all your prayers are abundantly appreciated by me and my family. I only wish I had the words to truly express my love for each one of you. I pray that the Lord will continue to bestow exceedingly abundant blessings on each one of you and our churches, that He will receive all the honor and glory due Him and we can see many souls saved. May God bless and keep each one of you until we meet again.