

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

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**Thursday Morning, September 30, 1999**

The Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists convened in its 147<sup>th</sup> annual session with Roller's Chapel Church, Clinchport, Virginia.

Roller's Chapel Church had its beginning in 1947. A man in the community by the name of Charles Roller had been called by God to preach His gospel. He cleaned his barn out and started conducting services there. The congregation began to grow and Brother Roller felt the need of a Primitive Baptist Church somewhere in the vicinity of Pattonville. The closest church was either Burke's Union or Peterson's Chapel. This created a hardship on the people of the community since they had to walk to church. He contacted the people of the community and found that they were willing to establish a church. Brother Roller's father-in-law, J. A. Percy, willingly gave the land where the church now stands. Brother Roller owned and operated a saw mill at the time and sawed the church pattern. Men in the community came and helped erect the building. His wife, Pearly Mae, and other good women helped in every way possible. Elder Roller's dream became a reality in April, 1948 when the church was organized and lettered into the association that same year. Originally the church received twelve members by letter and nine by experience and baptism. Brother Cecil Bledsoe and Marion Edwards were the first deacons. Ida Percy was the first clerk. Brothers Echol Legg, Emmett Rhoten and Charles Roller were the first trustees of the church. Elders Ben Hill, Charles Roller and Alex Willis served as the church's first pastors. Elder Ben Hill brought the first message in the church after its erection. Others who have served as pastors are: Curtis Adams, Logan Willis, Bryan Moore, Corbett Bowen, Walter Pendergrass, Nelson Jones, Gerald Hopkins, J. D. Maggard, Don Woodward, Odus Caudill, Coy Willis, Mark Holder, and our present pastor, Greg Hill.

In 1961 Roller's Chapel hosted this great gathering for the first time. It was estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 people attended daily. In 1969 the association met here again. Now, thirty years later we feel honored and privileged to once again be the host church. Goldia Legg, Lenna Bowen, Bryan and Mary Moore, Garley Hood, and so many others that we could call by name were here during the first two associations, are no longer with us but as we have heard one of our dear pastors (Brother Alex Willis) say, "They are just in the other room." We feel their presence with us.

There have been many changes made to the church building in the last several years. Changes and improvements that have helped make it more comfortable for the people. We feel like the same spirit that led Elder Roller so many years ago is the same spirit that leads and guides us today. God has not changed, He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Cool morning air gave way to bright sunshine as God's children gathered for the first day of the 147<sup>th</sup> association. Many acquaintances were renewed as everyone arrived. God's wonderful love was among His children. Sister Zula McCullough led the congregation in singing some wonderful songs of praise to

our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It won't be very long till Jesus shall appear, so we must tarry here and wait for Him. His matchless love will comfort us, for it is by faith we can see that land that is fairer than day where we will meet on that beautiful shore. In memory of Brother Hank Winegar, the congregation sang "Let My Life Be A Light." The model church is the true church set up by God. Let us all strive to live our life in a way that is pleasing to God.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone and thanked God for this beautiful day He gave us. Changes in this life are many, but God changes not. He also brought to our attention the passing of Elder Bill Hatton since we last met and reminded everyone of our memorial service on Saturday.

Elder John Henry Sybert came forward and after a wonderful testimony, lead the congregation in singing the wonderful song of praise "Brethren We Have Met Again."

The moderator appointed the Committee on Religious Exercises which includes: Morris Giles (chairman), Grover Ferguson and Bobby Caudill.

Prayer is an opportunity to look beyond, forget the cares of this life and center our hearts and minds on the Lord. Only through His mercy are we gathered here. Let us not only love Him, but love one another as well. Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, Mary Smith, Raymond Disney, Junior Collier, Clarence New, Denny Hensley, family of Guy Eldridge, Perry Allen, Jr., our young people, Elmer Newberry, Jim Burke, A. D. Howington's wife and son, Irene "Tea" Winegar, Marvin Ketron, Leon Ritchie's wife, Delmas Harris, Jason Robinette's nephew, our nation, the leaders of our nation, the 17 year old girl, Megatha and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Lucian Lane took our petitions to the Lord in a most humble prayer.

Elder Greg Hill, pastor of the host church, welcomed everyone while the Roller's Chapel singers were coming to the stand. He asked that we put everything behind us and worship God. We were blessed with songs of Zion from the church singers and by the Osborne Quartet. This earth holds no treasure for God's people because heaven holds all for the children of God. When He whispers sweet peace, all of life's misgivings disappear. As beggars we have nothing to give, but God gave His son and His son gave His life that we might go free.

Having been chosen to preach the introductory sermon, Elder Greg Hill came forward. He thanked God for all the help that was given to Roller's Chapel. He read from Zephaniah 2:1-3 and used as a thought "God gathered us together." Our life is hid in Christ and He is always in the midst of us. One day there will be a great gathering when Christ comes after His own. Elder Allen Hensley, the alternate, followed with another message from above. Great things happen when the Lord gathers His children together, for He gives them a mind to work. God is the author and finisher of our faith. He blesses us when we gather according to the terms He set up, which bring us together in one mind and one accord. Let us strive to please God rather than obey man. Tears

of joy and shouts of praise were everywhere as the Lord blessed us through these men's preaching.

The congregation was adjourned for lunch with the singing of several songs of praise.

### **Thursday Afternoon, September 30, 1999**

After a wonderful lunch served by the host church, the congregation gathered in the tent for the afternoon service with the singing of songs of praise. Oh the joy of that glad meeting just inside the eastern gate where we'll meet the One who saved us by His marvelous grace. 'Tis a sweet and glorious thought to know we'll live throughout eternity with our blessed Redeemer. His unseen hand leads us and guides us through this weary land till we reach that golden strand.

Elder Darrell Ratliff blessed us with his testimony and song of praise. We are homesick for sweet Beulah Land, where there are no sad goodbyes and time doesn't matter, for our home will be eternal.

Elder Terry Sizemore thanked the host church for the bountiful lunch and thanked God for His blessings. He asked that all ministers sign the register, including visiting ministers.

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

Stand tonight: Darrell Ratliff, Roger VanHoose and John Bowlin.

Liberty Chapel: Oscar Irvin, Arry Hickman and Paul Strong.

Stand, Friday morning, October 1, 1999: Larry Miller and Richard Seiber.

Prayer requests include the unsaved everywhere, all the requests made in this morning's service and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder John Turner led us to the throne of grace.

Brother Joe Robinette, 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 Henry Sybert was nominated. It was motioned, seconded and voted for him to serve during the

election. Elder Sybert thanked the delegation for their confidence in him just before the election.

Brother Danny Lawson was nominated to serve as clerk and treasurer. No other nominations were made and it was motioned, seconded and voted by acclamation 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 by acclamation for Elder Sizemore to serve as the moderator of the association for the ensuing year.

Elder Sizemore, speaking for himself and the clerk, thanked the delegation for their prayers and their confidence. The honor of serving this group of God's people is a humbling experience, and we both thank the delegation from the bottom of our hearts for their confidence and trust they put in us. Most of all, we thank God for giving us the opportunity to serve Him in this capacity. He also asked everyone 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: Burnice Sybert (chairman), Wayne Morgan, Bradley Bowen and Paul Johnson (alternate).

Committee on Newly Constituted Churches: Ministers – Arry Hickman (chairman), Bob Brown, Jason Robinette; Deacons – Steve Minton, Ralph Baker; Laymen – Darrell Smith and Jack Osborne.

Committee on Finance: Bill VanHoose (chairman), Virgil Lipe and Richard Seiber.

Committee on Obituaries: A. D. Howington (chairman), Fred Gilreath and Neal Drinnon.

Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries: Oscar Irvin (chairman), Eckel Head, Lewis Baker, Roger Trent, Roger VanHoose, John Arnott and Darrell Ratliff.

Due to the passing of Brother Hank Winegar, one of the Tennessee trustees, the moderator reviewed the list of all association trustees. It was motioned, seconded and voted to add Brother Billy Jack Johnson as a Tennessee trustee. The association trustees include:

Kentucky - Wendell Parsons, Cassell Caudill and Jack Creech

Virginia - Jess Akens Jr., Carl Peterson and Ralph Baker

Ohio - Morris Giles, Joe Pitzer and Ray Eldridge

Tennessee - Burnice Sybert, Bill Poole and Billy Jack Johnson

The moderator asked the delegation to consider our youth by checking into what might be done to get them more involved in our association. It was motioned to form a committee to determine the best approach for handling this matter. After much discussion, a second to the motion was not obtained, therefore the motion was dropped.

The moderator announced that direction books to the churches were available beside the clerk's table.

The business being concluded, the delegation was dismissed until Friday morning, October 1, 1999.

### **Friday Morning, October 1, 1999**

The weather was very cool, but that didn't dampen the spirits of God's children on the second day of the 147<sup>th</sup> association. Sister Zula McCullough led us in singing some hymns of praise to the Lord. God so wonderfully blessed His people as they praised Him through song. In this world we stand on the promises of God which deliver to us joy unspeakable and full of glory. The half has never been told about that city He has prepared for His children. Won't it be wonderful there when we fly away to our new home to be with the One that lead us by His unseen hand?

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone back to today's services, thanking God for His mercy. His blessings have been many during this great gathering.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all those made in yesterday's services, family of Roger Keith, Taft Gilliam, Henry Hurd, Terry's brother, Henry Wheeler's neighbors – the Walker family, Lucian Lane's sister, and a host of unspoken request signified by uplifted hands. Elder Eddie Malone led us to the throne of grace with a most humble prayer.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

With one minor correction it was motioned, seconded and voted to adopt the business proceedings of yesterday as read.

The West View singers blessed us with their songs. We know of a river that never runs dry and of a fountain that frees the soul from sin, for we long to see what heaven will be.

Having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, Elder Larry Miller came forward to take the first part of the service. He read Romans 8:1-3 and verse 21 using as a thought "The law that man comes under." The Lord has made us free. Old things have passed away because the Lord made us a

new creature in Him. We are Christ-like in God and if our life is hid in Him, when He shall appear, we shall appear with Him. God's children have liberty and if we don't live a Godly life, it is our fault. Elder Richard Seiber followed with another message sent from heaven above. The river that flows from the throne of God will never run dry. His blessings are endless. He put our sins away as far as the east is from the west so that we might be free. We can do nothing in ourselves but only through Christ Jesus living within us. Let us do everything we do for the glory of God. These men preached so wonderful to us and God used them in a mighty way. Joy unspeakable and full of glory comes only from God. Don't be afraid to let the world know you are free.

The Riverside Quartet blessed us with their songs as we fellowshiped. Then we were adjourned for lunch.

## **Friday Afternoon, October 1, 1999**

After eating another good meal served by the host church, the congregation gathered in the tent for the afternoon service. Sister Zula McCullough led us as we sang praise to our most wonderful Savior. He showered us with holy manna from above. Can't you just imagine that wonderful place where there will be no sad good-byes or tear dimmed eyes and the soul of man never dies? In that land of uncloudy skies our eyes shall behold our home just waiting there for us at the end of life's troublesome ways. How beautiful heaven must be, for when we are happy in Him, all that is within us rejoices.

Elder Sizemore welcomed the congregation back while thanking God for His blessings. He asked everyone to obey the Lord and thanked the host church for the wonderful job they have done serving this great body. The Lord will always make a way!

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all those made in earlier services, the revival at Richardson's Chapel, Elder Leonard Flanary, Sister Bennett from Macedonia, Joyce Carr and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Brother Joe Pitzer 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: David VanHoose, Lewis Baker and Harold Shaw.

Poplar Grove: Darrell Ratliff and Bill VanHoose.

Liberty Chapel: John Arnott, A. D. Howington and Gale Derrick.

Mountain View: Jason Robinette.

Stand, Saturday morning, October 2, 1999: Terry Sizemore and John Henry Sybert.

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

The Committee on Finance reported \$5,332.00 in receipts for the year.

The Committee on Obituaries reported that 62 had been received at this time.

The Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries reported that two were received. The committee determined that one was answered last year and the other had been answered earlier as printed in the minutes. A motion was made to read the query from Rose Chapel as an appeal to the committee's findings, but no second was obtained, therefore the motion was dropped.

The men responsible for writing this year's circular letter came forward. Elders Roger Trent and Jason Robinette looked on as Elder James Jarnigan read the letter. Its content was straightforward that we all must present ourselves wholly and acceptable to God. Everyone should study to show themselves approved and always love one another, even those that might spitefully use us. We must love as the Lord loves. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print it in the minutes as read.

Elder Sizemore appointed 3 brethren to prepare the circular letter for 2000. They are: Elders Richard Seiber and Greg Hill and Brother Delmer Wallen, Sr.

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.

Elder Carl Lawson asked the delegation to relieve him as chairman of the committee to oversee the electrical and PA systems. He recommended that Brother Delmer McPherson serve as the chairman of this committee. The association accepted his recommendation and it was motioned, seconded and voted that the following committee oversee the association electrical and PA systems: Brother Delmer McPherson (chairman), Elder Carl Lawson, Elder Howard Sybert, Brothers Scott Mellons, Bobby Caudill, Roger Smith and Danny Lawson.

Elder Hasco Jenkins made a motion for the association to purchase a desk light and place it on the stand to help those trying to read. The motion was seconded and Elder Tommy Meade offered to donate one to the association. The association agreed to accept the offer, so the motion and second were withdrawn.

Brother Jim Bowlin asked the association to remember Hyder Reynolds at the loss of his mother. This man has been a tremendous help to this association in moving the kitchen from one location to another, as well as keeping it in running order.

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

It was brought to the attention of the association that some larger kerosene heaters might need to be obtained for the tent. No discussion was forthcoming, so the matter was dropped.

There were 5 churches that asked for the association to meet with them in 2000. One of these withdrew before the plea process leaving Beech Grove, Butcher's Valley, Clear Springs and House Chapel. During the plea process another church withdrew leaving the vote between Beech Grove, Butcher's Valley and Clear Springs. By a clear majority, the delegation sent the association to Butcher's Valley, where the Lord willing we will convene on Thursday morning (October 5, 2000) before the first Saturday in October, 2000. Introductory - Elder Henry Wheeler; Alternate - Elder Delmas Harris.

Adjourned until Saturday morning, October 3, 1999.

### **Saturday Morning, October 3, 1999**

The sun shined over the trees and down into the valley as God's people gathered for the memorial service on this third day of the association. The Lord has blessed us with such beautiful weather thus far in all the services. We were blessed with several individuals singing songs of Zion in honor and praise to our blessed Redeemer just before Sister Zula McCullough led the congregation in singing some blessed old hymns. We are redeemed by love divine, for on that resurrection morning when the trump of God shall sound, we shall rise to our new home on high. Oh, I want to see Him and look upon His face in that land where we'll never grow old!

Elder Sizemore welcomed the congregation back to today's service. Thanks be to God for all His blessings and watchcare over us. This is a very special day where we honor the memory of those gone on to their reward. We may be sad at their passing, but we should be glad for they are with the Lord. Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

The Clear Springs Quartet filled our hearts with joy with their songs of praise and wonderful testimony. Weep not friends, we're going home to glory land where we'll die no more. One day the mighty hand of God will come down to move His children out. Sister Naomi Atkins reminded us in song that while He is truly God on the mountain, He is still God in the valley. Our God is not dead like so many religions have, but our God is alive today and forevermore. We must live our lives to let all know we belong to God. Our hope is that the lost



would realize their need for Christ in their life and find Him precious to their soul before it is everlasting too late.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all the requests made in earlier services, Ora Arnott, Iona Scott, the dear ladies' son and brother, the precious little girl's mom and family, John Henry Sybert, Tommy Meade's son and brothers, Donald Sybert's daughters and sons-in-law, Bill Bowlin, a host of unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands and many more that the clerk did not know or could not understand the names. Brother Jonathan Buttry led us to the throne of grace.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

With one minor wording change, it was motioned, seconded and voted to adopt the business proceedings of yesterday as read.

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 moderator read the report from the Committee on Religious Exercises:

Stand tonight: John Arnott, Jason Robinette and Jonathan Buttry.

Poplar Grove: Roger VanHoose.

Liberty Chapel: Lucian Lane and Hasco Jenkins.

Wallen's Creek: A. D. Howington, Wayne Morgan and Earnest Bledsoe.

Mt. Zion: Bazzel Manis

Stand, Sunday morning, October 3, 1999: Jerry Johnson and Delmas Harris.

Sunday night, October 3, 1999: Beech Grove, Paul Strong; Shelby Creek, Harold Head and David Smith.

The Osborne Quartet blessed us with their songs. God sees beyond today and if we are to ever understand, we must cling to His saving hand. Some day we will understand it all when He calls His children to their home on high. Sister Aubra Hill reminded us we must be about His business and praise His holy name. We all want to say, I want the Lord to be satisfied with me, but we must do everything for His glory and honor and He will smile and let us know that He is satisfied with us.

Our memorial service has been a part of this association since 1956, so the moderator read the names of those dear departed saints which we remember today. Yes, we miss them tremendously but they are at rest with our blessed Redeemer. Thank God that He allowed them to be with us as long as He did.

Elder John Henry Sybert came forward to take the first part of the service. He read from II Timothy 1:1-12 and used as his thought "The Unfeigned Faith." Unfeigned faith is genuine, it does not try to fool anyone. Like many we are told about in the Bible that had this unfeigned faith, these dear saints that have passed from among us since we last gathered together had unfeigned faith, also. It comes only from God and only in His way will He deliver it to His children. Elder Terry Sizemore followed with another wonderful message sent down from heaven. God is due all praise and honor. It is impossible to do too much for the Lord. He sent His Son to seek and to save that which was lost, and by this His marvelous salvation was freely offered to all. Let us be willing vessels so God can use us to His glory. In a world filled with fakes and imitations, it is a blessing from God to know the genuine faith that is the unfeigned faith. The God our forefathers served 147 years ago is the same God we serve today, for He is the same yesterday, today and forevermore. We don't need anything new, we have the best of the best, and that is Christ Jesus the Lord.

We were adjourned until Sunday morning, October 3, 1999.

### **Sunday Morning, October 3, 1999**

The Lord blessed His children with another beautiful day for this the last day of this great gathering. Just watching as everyone entered the church, smiling, basking in the blessings of the Lord. The church was filled and many were outside, but the Lord was all around.

We were blessed with congregational singing. Our victory is in the precious blood of the Lamb. Some sweet day we'll sing the song of victory. We are living in a brand new world since the Lord saved us. When misgivings darken our way, the Lord whispers sweet peace to us in that still small voice to dispel all our fears. Peace, peace, wonderful peace coming down from the Father above sweeps over our spirit to lead and guide us. God leads His dear children along in varying ways according to His blessed will.

We were further blessed by special singing and testimonies from Sister Cora L. Neeley, Sister Doris Burke and others. A better home awaits for us just beyond the gates. No matter what we are faced with in this life, we must take the road we know for it leads us to Jesus. We have so much to thank Him for, so let us search out the old paths and walk therein. We must not let dust gather where we used to pray, but we must pray more for each other and do the will of our Father.

Elder Greg Hill, pastor of the host church, welcomed everyone thanking God for all He has done. The people of Roller's Chapel count it a privilege and honor to have served this grand body of God's children.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, Edith Eldridge, Mary Bloomer's mother, brother and sister, dear ladies son and grandson, Maebelle Wilson and Linel, Dustin Lawson's friends John Kirk and Kelly Light, now serving in the

U.S. Marine Corps and Kevin Burke, Claude Osborne's son, Greg Hill's children, all our young people, and old as well, all our churches, especially those without a pastor, and a host of unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Brother Harmon Willis led us to the throne of grace. We were blessed to hear many wonderful testimonies that the clerk was unable to get all the names, but the Lord knows each and every one of them.

Elder Delmas Harris, having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, came forward to take the first part of the service. He read from St. John 4:34-38 using as a thought "Obedience to the Spirit of God." God gives His children a mind to work; that is, to do the things He would have them do. God didn't just think about it, but He sent His Son to make a way where we might have a home eternal in the heavens. Let us not just think about it, but do what God puts in our mind to do. We are not saved to just sit back and think, but to go out to the highways and the byways and the hedges to compel the sinners to come in that they might be saved by the grace of God. Elder Woodrow Fields followed with another inspiring message from above. We have a better place waiting for us, but let us work for the Lord in this life so we can enjoy His blessings here, too. If we don't obey God, it may hinder some of our friends and loved ones from ever coming to know Christ in the free pardon of sin. Through Christ we can sow the seed and water it, but God must give the increase. He will give us rest if we will come to Him in faith believing. These men preached so wonderfully.

We were proud to have several preaching brethren in attendance today. We have a lot to be thankful for in our preaching brethren. God has blessed us with men who will stand and preach the Word of God in a time when it is not popular. We thank God for each and every one of them and pray that God would bless them tremendously wherever He may send them to do His work.

This has been a truly wonderful week in the Lord. Words cannot express what He has done for His children. We do not know what seeds have been sown here this week that will be watered on down the road to yield an increase in days to come. I hope in some way that as you read these few words they will be a blessing to you and to others that were not able to attend. I pray that the same spirit that blessed me while writing them will do the same for you. Ignore the mistakes and realize the intent in which it was written, that being the love of a brother in Christ as we press on toward our eternal home. May the Lord richly bless each one of you. Remember all our churches in prayer, and never forget to give the Lord all the honor and praise that we might see many souls saved. God bless and keep each and every one of you until we meet again.