

PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Thursday Morning, October 5, 2000

The Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists convened in its 148th annual session with Butcher's Valley Church, Rogersville, Tennessee.

Butcher's Valley Church lettered into the association in 1953 with messengers: Bale Lee Richards, Lee A. Richards, Troy Waites and as messenger and pastor, E. J. Presley.

Other pastors throughout the years are: Elders: Harry Fannon, Ray Gatt, E. Robinette, Bernie Davis, Charles Depew, Jr., Willard Morrisett, Clarence Arrington, Lloyd Scalf, Robert Vermillion, Charles F. Greer, Aster Banks, Paul Strong, Robert Jenkins, George Helbert, J. H. Hurst, James Mullins, Delmas Harris and our present pastor, Jerry Johnson.

Butcher's Valley Church is still in its original location. Great revivals have been conducted with many precious souls being saved since the church first began.

Through the years the church, like many others, has been through trials but it is currently growing with a membership of 89. Most of all the Lord is still richly blessing with the sweet Holy Spirit which gives us the strength to look for the blessed promise He has given and encourages us to sincerely contend for the faith.

Bright sunshine cleared away the morning fog as God's children arrived for the 148th annual session of this great gathering. Friendships made many years ago were once again renewed and many saw each other for the first time since last year's meeting. The smiles on the faces of God's children are a sight to behold. Sister Zula McCullough led the congregation in singing some wonderful songs of praise to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as His holy manna was showered all around. By faith we can see the land that is fairer than day where we'll live in the sweet by and by. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound of an old time Christian's praise of our Savior. In this life we count the milestones one by one as we still go farther toward glory land. It is truly better farther on.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone and thanked God for His many blessings. God's people have a truly wonderful cause to carry forward. Our hope is that some lost soul might put their trust in Him and be saved. Since our last meeting Elders Arthur Jack Hensley, Isaiah Purkey, Clarence New and Broten Smith have went on to their reward. Let us remember the families of these dear departed saints of God as we thank Him for the lives these men lived. Elder Sizemore reminded all ministers to sign the minister's book, as well as any visiting ministers.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Religious Exercises which includes: Ralph Baker (chairman), Jess Akens, Jr. and Marvin Ketron.

Elder John Henry Sybert came forward and blessed us with his testimony just before leading the congregation in singing the wonderful song of praise, "Brethren We Have Met Again."

Elder Sizemore read a note of appreciation to the association from Elder Leonard Flanary thanking everyone for all the help he has received and also a note from Elder Johnnie Leon and Cora Ritchie thanking everyone for all the help they received during Sister Cora's sickness. Please continue to remember these folks in your prayers.

Prayer requests were made for: the unsaved, Billy Jack Johnson's wife, Preacher R. L. McGee, Ruth Hurd, Carl Lawson, Michael Peterson, Bob Carter, Walter Self and his wife, John Turner's niece, A. D. Howington's wife and son, who just recently got saved, Sue Giles, Jim Burke, a member of Jenkin's Chapel, Charlie Sizemore's daughter, Shorty Denton, Charlie McCorry and the young man in children's hospital, Darrell Ratliff, the man's half-brother and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Oscar Irvin led us to the throne of grace in a soul stirring prayer.

Elder Jerry Johnson, pastor of the host church, came forward to thank the delegation for sending the association to Butcher's Valley. He welcomed everyone and asked them to obey the Holy Spirit.

Sister Loretta Emery blessed us with her wonderful testimony and song of praise. She asked us to remember her son in our prayers. His children are walking, talking miracles for His gentle touch brings many miracles to us.

Having been chosen to preach the introductory sermon, Elder Henry Wheeler came forward. He read Ephesians 2:1-9 for his inspiring message. Let us open our hearts that we might serve the One that saved us from our sins. God paid the sin debt for each of us and His Word is His promise to those that repent of their sins and trust Him as their Lord and Savior. He set us on a solid foundation and He will take us all to heaven when He is ready. Elder Delmas Harris followed with another message from God. If you will hearken to His voice, He will save your soul. His work was finished on the cross and we are to carry it on. We each have a job to do and God is not pleased when we don't do what He bids us to do. We must show God we love Him by obeying His every word and being sincere in our purpose of service to Him. These men preached their hearts out and delivered to us a message from God. Praise Him for His marvelous grace and His matchless love!

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

Thursday Afternoon, October 5, 2000

The congregation gathered in the tent for the afternoon service with the singing of songs of praise. God smiles on His children and does not deny us His blessings. By trusting in His unseen hand, we'll soon meet in the morning of all mornings as we enter that land of uncloudy day. Our home awaits at the end of life's troublesome way. Just knowing our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ allows us to smile at Satan's rage and face a frowning world.

Elder Terry Sizemore thanked the host church for the wonderful lunch. God has blessed us beyond measure in this life and this is nothing compared to what awaits His children when they get home.

Sister June Kail and the Witt sisters blessed us with their wonderful testimonies and songs of praise. Because He lives we long to see sweet Beulah land where our faith will end in sight.

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

Stand tonight: Greg Hill, Lowell Johnson, Gordon Justice and Lewis Baker.

Oak Grove: Hasco Jenkins, John Turner and Tommy Meade.

Liberty Chapel: James Jarnigan, A. D. Howington and Paul Strong.

House Chapel: Woodrow Fields and John Bowlin.

Burke's Union: Oscar Irvin, Eckel Head and Scott Tipton.

Stand, Friday morning, October 6, 2000: Lucian Lane, Bob Brown and John Arnott.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all the requests made in the morning service, Betty Sizemore, Marie Bell and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Eddie Malone led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

Brother Burnice Sybert, 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 God for the privilege of being at the association and also 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 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 ensuing year.

Elder Sizemore, speaking for himself and the clerk, thanked the delegation for the confidence they had placed in them. It is an honor and a privilege to be a part of this organization, let alone to be able to serve them. Most of all we thank God for His Holy Spirit and divine guidance as we attempt to bring glory and honor to His holy name. We also thank the delegation from the bottom of our hearts for their confidence and trust they put in us. We ask everyone to continue praying for us 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 did not release the Committee on Church Letters, even though they gave their final report. He will do this at a later time.

The moderator then appointed the following committees:

Committee on Newly Constituted Churches: Ministers – John Arnott (chairman), James Jarnigan, John Bowlin; Deacons – Ralph Moore, Morris Giles; Laymen – Delmer Wallen, Jr. and Gleason Storie.

Committee on Finance: Bill LaFollette (chairman), Jim Emery and Neal Drinnon.

Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries: John H. Sybert (chairman), A. D. Howington, Fred Gilreath, Eckel Head, Bill VanHoose, Larry Miller and Lewis Baker.

Committee on Obituaries: Oscar Irvin (chairman), Charley Johnson and John Turner.

The moderator recognized Elder Woodrow Fields for his dedicated work and faithful service in the kitchen for many years. His willingness to help with anything and his wonderful donation of a meat slicer to the association. He also thanked Elder Tommy Meade for his donation of a desk light for the stand in the tent.

The clerk informed the delegation that the association had been granted a sales tax exemption account in the state of Tennessee where the association is chartered. He also informed the congregation about the creation of a website on the world wide web for the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists. While there are a few articles already on the site, it will be developed more as time permits. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print the address in the minutes.

The moderator announced that direction books to the churches were available beside the clerk's table, as well as minutes from last year.

The business being concluded, the delegation was dismissed until Friday morning, October 6, 2000.

Friday morning, October 6, 2000

As everyone gathered for the second day of the 148th association, the cloudy skies didn't hamper God's holy spirit, it just reminded His children of the uncloudy day when we'll all go home to be with Jesus. Sister Zula McCullough led us as we sang praises to our Lord and Savior. What a glad day that will be when the blessed home gate swings open for us and we stand on heaven's bright shore. It is enough to know that Jesus saved us from an eternity of pain and suffering. We long to be just inside the home gate with our dear Redeemer.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone to today's services, and thanked God for His blessings. We have a wonderful Heavenly Father and we thank Him for His amazing grace.

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.

The youth group from Burke's Union Church blessed us with their wonderful singing. It did our hearts good to see these young people stepping out to serve the Lord. Let us always let our light shine until Jesus comes, no matter where we may be. Whether we know the day or not, we will never forget when the Lord touched us and saved our soul. Let us continually remember all our youth in our prayers.

Our hearts were saddened as we heard the news of Sister Cora Ritchie's passing. Prayer requests were made for her family, the unsaved, all those made in yesterday's services, Zula McCullough's sister - Margaret, ladies grandson - Clayton, Billy Jack Johnson's wife and new granddaughter, lady with cancer about to begin her treatments, Joyce Carr and a host of unspoken request signified by uplifted hands. Brother Jess Akens led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

We were further blessed by Elder Terry Sizemore's song of praise. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost and then He got on a cloud and went home. Thank God He is coming again one day to get His children.

Having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, Elder Lucian Lane came forward to take the first part of the service. His song was a blessing to us all. He read Matthew 16:13-19 and used as a thought "What so ever God promises, He will do." If we will cast our net on the Lord's side He will make us fishers of men. We must wait on the Lord until we feel His

power. If we trust in Him He will let us drink from the well that never runs dry. Elder Bob Brown took the second part of the service with another message from on high. We are to be a light to this world. Let us deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Christ. In the whole scheme of things, what we do for Jesus is all that matters. Elder John Arnott took the last part of the service as the Lord so richly blessed. We have to worship God in spirit and in truth. Let us come humble before God, for our hope is not in the world, but in the One of that city not made with hands. Oh how great a God we serve. Let us rejoice that our name is written in the Lamb's book of life. These men preached so wonderful to us. Thank God for His mercy and amazing grace.

We were adjourned for lunch with shouting and singing of praise. Tears of joy filled the eyes of His children as they rejoiced and thanked Him for all he has done.

Friday Afternoon, October 6, 2000

After partaking of another delicious meal served by the host church, the congregation gathered in the tent for the afternoon service. Sister Zula McCullough was joined by others in singing songs of praise to our Savior. Heaven holds all to God's children. Our trials on earth will cease some day and we'll go home to be with our Father. The joy of knowing you're a child of the King helps us get through anything Satan may throw at us. The touch from the master's unseen hand will lead us to that home where sin nor sorrow can come. He is the dearest friend we will ever know.

We were further blessed by the singers from Blue Springs Church and the 'Clearview' singers of Clear Springs and Fairview churches in Ohio. It will be a grand tomorrow when we get home. No matter how heavy the load may be, Jesus is the answer. We are ready for our last move to heaven, our new home that was bought by our Blessed Redeemer. We have no need to look back and it is a joy to know we're nearing the shore.

Elder Sizemore welcomed the congregation back and thanked the host church for the bountiful meal they served. He also thanked God for the goodness of His bounty He has so wonderfully served His children.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all those made in earlier services and Sam Brashears. Brother Billy Jack Johnson took our petitions to the Lord in a most humble prayer.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

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

Stand tonight: Richard Seiber and Tommy Meade.

House Chapel: James Jarnigan, Greg Hill, Arry Hickman, Hasco Jenkins and John Turner.

Liberty Chapel: Bob Brown and Russell Davidson.

Poplar Grove: Lewis Baker and Frank Mullins.

Oak Grove: Roger VanHoose, Bill VanHoose and Harold Head.

Stand, Saturday morning, October 7, 2000: John Henry Sybert and Terry Sizemore.

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

The Committee on Finance reported \$5,099.00 in receipts for the year.

The Committee on Obituaries reported that 72 had been received at this time.

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

These committees were discharged after giving their report. The Committee on Religious Exercises will be discharged tomorrow after their final report is given.

The moderator also discharged the Committee on Church Letters and appointed a new committee for next year which includes: Elder Wayne Morgan (chairman), Bradley Bowen, Paul Johnson and David Horton (alternate).

The men responsible for writing this year's circular letter came forward. Elders Richard Seiber and Greg Hill looked on as Brother Delmer Wallen, Sr. read the letter. Its straightforward message was to each of us concerning God's word and it's message. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print it in the minutes as read.

Elder Sizemore appointed 3 elders to prepare the circular letter for 2001. They are: Elders Hasco Jenkins, Bob Brown and Arry Hickman.

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 and for the following committee to 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 Carl Lawson thanked God for His mercy, goodness and watch care over Him and also thanked everyone for their prayers during his recent sickness.

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

The moderator mentioned again the passing of Sister Cora Ritchie and the fact that her family had no insurance. A love offering was taken up for the family as the congregation sang "Happy Birthday" to John Henry Sybert, Carson Johnson and all the others who have celebrated their birthday during the sitting of this association. A total of \$1041.02 was given and will be taken by Elder John Turner to this family.

There were 7 churches that asked for the association to meet with them in 2001. One of these withdrew before the plea process leaving Blackwater Lick, Clear Springs, House Chapel, Richardson's Chapel, Riverside and Slate Hill. During the plea process 3 other churches withdrew leaving the vote between Clear Springs, House Chapel and Slate Hill. Due to the vote being so close, another vote was taken between the 2 churches receiving the most votes which were Clear Springs and Slate Hill. After another vote showing no clear majority, Slate Hill Church withdrew, leaving Clear Springs. The delegation sent the association to Clear Springs, where the Lord willing we will convene on Thursday morning (October 4, 2001) before the first Saturday in October, 2001. Introductory - Elder Roger VanHoose; Alternate - Elder Jason Robinette.

Adjourned until Saturday morning, October 7, 2000.

Saturday Morning, October 7, 2000

The unusually cool weather forecast may have kept some of the people away from today's service, but it in no way hampered God's sweet spirit as His blessings were exceedingly abundant on His children. Sister Zula McCullough led us in singing several songs of Zion on this the third day of the association and our memorial service. Jesus' life is the pattern for the Christians of all ages. The trials of this life help us realize the days we would like to be all alone with Christ our Lord and tell Him all our troubles. When the redeemed have gathered in everybody will be happy over there for we will be washed like snow and free from all sin. T'is so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take Him at His word. This earth will soon perish but heaven holds all to us.

Elder Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone to today's services. Of all the things this old world has to offer, heaven still holds all to the children of God.

Today we honor the lives and memory of our dear departed saints of God that have gone on to their reward since we last met. Their passing makes us sad but we should rejoice for they are with our Savior basking in His glory.

Let us celebrate their lives and rejoice in knowing they are at home with Jesus Christ our 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.

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

Stand tonight: Roger VanHoose, Bill VanHoose, Jason Robinette and Harold Head.

Roller's Chapel: Allen Hensley and Terry Sizemore.

Poplar Grove: Bob Brown.

Liberty Chapel: Lucian Lane and John Bowlin.

Oak Grove: A. D. Howington, Woodrow Fields and Frank Mullins.

Wallen's Creek: Jonathan Buttry and Wayne Morgan.

The moderator made the congregation aware that Sister Eileen Brown sends out a regular announcement to the churches about revivals in our churches. If anyone knows of a revival, she will gladly add it to her announcement if you let her know.

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

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all the requests made in earlier services, Curtis Amos, Sheena Osborne, Tommy Meade's mother-in-law, Jason Emery and a host of unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Billy Johnson led us to the throne of grace.

The West View Quartet blessed us with their songs of praise. How precious is the promise that we'll soon be home with Jesus. The Lord is near and He will bear our burdens if we will just lay them at His feet.

Elder Jerry Johnson, pastor of the host church, thanked everyone for sending the association to Butcher's Valley and offered his appreciation for what it had done for the church, especially the youth. Let us keep all our youth before the Lord at all times.

The Clear Springs singers blessed us with their wonderful testimonies and songs. We are brothers and sisters in Christ and we have a better place to go. We're looking for that happy time when Jesus will beckon us home to stay. What a beautiful day for the Lord to come again and take us to our home in heaven.

Since 1956 the memorial service has been a part of this association. The moderator read the names of those dear departed saints which we remember today. Even though they are greatly missed we take solace in knowing they are with our Blessed Redeemer. Thank God for allowing us to have them with us as long as He did.

Elder John Henry Sybert came forward to take the first part of the service. He read Malachi 3:16-18 using as a thought "They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another." God told his disciples to rejoice because their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. We too should rejoice for no greater thing can ever happen to us in this life. Let us not fail to talk about the goodness of the Lord to the world. Elder Terry Sizemore followed with another wonderful message. Nothing is done in secret with God. As the saints of old spoke often one to another, let us also show the love of God one to another, for if we will speak of His goodness it will lift the inward man up. We can show our love by saying here am I Lord, send me and use me for thy purpose. Shouts of praise rang out from the tent and could be heard all over the grounds as God so wonderfully blessed His children. We serve a wonderful God, may we never forget to give Him all the praise, honor and glory for all we do. Thank Him for these dear men that preached so wonderful to us. Thank Him for all those that stand to preach His word. Shouts of praise and tears of joy were abundant as we sang songs of praise unto our Savior.

We were adjourned until Sunday morning, October 8, 2000.

Sunday Morning, October 8, 2000

The air may have been cold but the hearts of God's children were warmed as we gathered for the last day of the 148th association. God blessed us with another beautiful day to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

God smiled on His children as the Butcher's Valley singers offered their songs of praise unto our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We're on our way to Canaan land where there will be no tear dimmed eyes and no sad farewells. So many times when this old world gets us down, we'd just like to kneel down and talk it all over with Jesus and thank Him for His wonderful love. When seeking a refuge for our soul, where could we go but to the Lord.

Elder Wiley Lampkin welcomed everyone to today's service and encouraged them to obey the holy spirit. We thank God for His many blessings He has bestowed upon His people during the sitting of this association. He is a merciful God and His daily watch care over us assures us that the joy and peace we have in our soul can come from none other than God.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, and many wonderful testimonies and prayer requests were offered up to the Lord. I apologize for not being able to get the names but God knows every one of them and is able

to answer our prayers in due time. Elder David Smith led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

Elder John Henry Sybert took the first part of the service. He read from Hebrews 10:1-22 using as a thought "Lo, I come in the volume of the book." Sin can only be purged by the blood of Jesus, no human offering can take sin away. God sent His son to seek and to save that which was lost and we have a promise that He will return again for His children to go home for eternity. Elder David Smith followed with another wonderful message. If we have been bought by the blood of the Lamb, we are in the volume of the book. God laid His life down and He has the power to raise it back up. We have the power to believe by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Elder Wayne Morgan took the last part of the service delivering another message from on high. It is only in the Lord that we live and breath and have our being. Many people help us throughout this life but none can come close to the help we receive from Christ. These men preached so wonderfully to us and while it may be somewhat sad to see the close of another association their preaching fell right in line with all that we have been feasting on in the earlier services. Thank God for all our preaching brethren that will stand without faltering and preach the word of God.

As the old saying goes, what a week. God has truly showered us with His holy manna of which we have feasted this week. Another association has come and gone and I did not get to talk with everyone as I would have liked. I do want you to know that I appreciate each one of you from the depths of my heart. You are a special group of people and I know of no other organization that I would rather be a part. From my seat I can see your faces and the blessings that the Lord bestows upon you. I praise His holy name for meeting with us and also for each one of you and what you mean to me. I only wish I had the words to express my true feelings for you. Let us continue to pray for the requests made during this association and remember our young people each time we pray to almighty God. I hope that the holy spirit will bless you while reading these words as much as it did me when I wrote them. Let us stand firm and steadfast giving God all the praise, glory and honor that we might see many souls come to know the Lord. May He richly bless each and every one of you until we meet again.