

PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Thursday Morning, October 4, 2001

The Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists convened in its 149th annual session with Clear Springs Church, Spring Valley, Ohio.

The Clear Springs Church had its beginning on Easter Sunday of 1966 when Elder Harold Shaw and other interested people rented a one-room schoolhouse on Clear Springs Road, a mile south of Spring Valley, Ohio.

The church obtained an arm from the Fairview Primitive Baptist Church and was organized with nine charter members: Elder H. L. Shaw, Sisters Evelyn Shaw and Ethel Shaw, Brother Joe Robinette, Sister Emma Jean Robinette, Brother James Asbury, Sister Madge Asbury, Brother M. B. Lawson and Sister Myrtle Lawson. When the association convened in its 114th annual session with Fairview Church in the fall of 1966, the church lettered in and sent delegates.

Having outgrown the schoolhouse, the decision was made to build a new house of worship. Five acres of land was purchased where we are assembled today.

The Lord gave these people, as the scriptures say, "a mind to work." A portion of the land was plowed and vegetables were raised and sold. Some members had garage sales. The children sold boxes of candy and had newspaper drives.

The church finally raised enough money to start building. The first service was held in the new building on Thursday before the first Saturday in May, 1971.

In 1974 the founders of Clear Springs Church wrote "the devoted people of God have labored hard to have a place to gather together and single out the one who made it possible and praise Him. That in the years to come they may experience the love and fellowship as in the past."

Over the next 26 years God blessed in church services and revivals, many souls were saved. Membership increased but attendance and devotion to the work of the Lord had fallen dramatically. The church began to pray for the Lord to send workers into the vineyard. It seemed as though we had entered into the labors of our forefathers. They had given us this beautiful place to worship and we took our ease. The church needed to regain vision and purpose. So we set aside a series of services and sent out invitations to all members in purpose to rededicate our lives to the Lord and to the church. To bind together, to work diligently for the cause of Christ and pray for one another continually. The Lord has blessed since the rededication service and many have a new zeal and great devotion toward one another and the church.

The church has had as its pastors: Elder Harold Shaw, the late Elder Ray Jackson, the late Elder Claude VanHoose, and Elder Roger VanHoose. The present pastor, Elder Bill VanHoose, began pastoring in 1997.

God's children arrived with smiles on their faces and joy in their hearts with an abundance of God's beautiful sunshine on this the first day of the 149th association. It is truly a blessing to just watch His children come together to worship Him, renew old acquaintances and offer praise to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Sister Zula McCullough led the congregation in singing some wonderful songs of praise. Faith is such a wonderful thing to a child of God, for through it we can see the land that is fairer than day. We shall meet on that beautiful shore to offer our tribute of praise for His glorious gift of life. As we journey through this land singing as we go, soon we'll reach our home at last to praise Him forevermore. Oh we long to see Him, to look upon His face but we must be content until we close our eyes in death or He returns for us some sweet day after while.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone and thanked God for this privilege of gathering together, noting how truly blessed we are, especially with the tragic events that have taken place in our country over the past few weeks. We who know the Lord have the victory. He also brought to our attention the passing of Elders Basil Freeman and Paul Purkey since we last met.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Religious Exercises which includes: Morris Giles (chairman), Edgar Neeley and Jim Parker.

Elder Bill VanHoose, pastor of the host church, welcomed everyone to Clear Springs and asked them to obey the Holy Spirit, relax, and enjoy the goodness of the Lord.

Elder Sizemore reminded us that no matter what the test, God never fails. We rely on a living God. He sent down the fire for Elijah and He will send it down for us if we ask in faith believing.

Elder John Henry Sybert reminded us about some of the history of the song "Brethren We Have Met Again," written by Elder I. S. Robinette just before leading the congregation in singing the wonderful song of praise.

Before going to the Lord in prayer, requests were made for the unsaved, Adam Wallen, Hazel Webb family, Reba Bledsoe, Jr. Yount, JoAnn Mounts, Brother Smith's neighbor, Bill Vanover, Brother and Sister Alvis, Frank Lane, Lucian Lane, Ralph Cox and many unspoken requests signified with uplifted hands. Our petitions were taken to the Lord in a most humble prayer led by Gleason Storie.

We were blessed with the wonderful testimony and singing from Brother Jarvis. This is another glorious day the Lord has made, let us rejoice in it and praise His wonderful name. As we consider the worlds He made, may we thank God for his power that is displayed throughout the universe and proclaim how

great thou art. May we never fail to bow in humble adoration of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Having been chosen to preach the introductory sermon, Elder Roger VanHoose came forward. He thanked everyone for coming and most of all God for His presence here with His children. He read Romans 5:1-8 using the 2nd verse as his thought, *“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”* Access to God is through and by Jesus Christ. It is a hope and an anchor, for the house that God built will not fall because it is founded on the true foundation, Jesus Christ. No greater thing can a man do than to lay down his life for another. No other way could man get to God except Jesus Christ lay down His life for us. What other foundation can be laid, other than that which has already been laid by Jesus Christ? Elder Jason Robinette followed with a wonderful song and a message from God. It matters not what you think about me, it matters not what men may say because Jesus came my poor soul to seek and save. We rejoice in knowing that on this journey we have hope in Jesus Christ. Yes, Jesus went away and He will come again in like manner to get His children. This is certainly easy to shout and rejoice about, but can we rejoice in tribulation? We must humble ourselves before Him if He is to use us for His glory. He will exalt us in times of tribulation if we give Him all the glory. We must obey God rather than man in everything we do. Turn it all over to Him and glory in Him throughout this journey then when tribulations come, be of good cheer for He has overcome it all. Many times God sends tribulation to prove His power. Thank Him for these men that preached so wonderfully to us and for His power and spirit. He is worthy of all our praise.

Elder Sizemore dismissed the congregation for lunch with a song of praise.

Thursday Afternoon, October 4, 2001

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. Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood, for it is on this solid rock we stand because all else is sinking sand. Just inside the eastern gate we'll stand over in the glory land with the One who died for us and praise His name throughout eternity.

We were further blessed with special singing from the West View Church singers and the youth group from Clear Springs. With a mighty rushing sound the river that will never run dry flows freely from the throne of God. The joy of knowing that Jesus loves us reassures us that He'll bring us through this world of sin by His wonderful power. Thank God, His mighty hand touched us and showed us the light. While it does our heart good to hear all His children praise His name in song, it was especially wonderful to see this good number of young people lifting their voices in praise to the Lord.

Elder Terry Sizemore thanked the host church for the bountiful lunch, all the wonderful singing and God for His blessings. He called to our attention the names of three additional elders that have passed from our midst since last year. These include Malcolm Hart, Charley McCory and Cecil Price.

The moderator read the report from the Committee on Religious Exercises as requested by Brother Morris Giles, chairman of the committee.

Stand tonight: Oscar Irvin, Bob Brown and Terry Sizemore.

Fairview (Bellbrook): David Jerrell, Richard Seiber and Wayne Morgan.

Rose Chapel: Roger Trent and David Smith.

Macedonia: Lewis Baker, Frank Gilliam and Greg Hill.

Stand, Friday morning, October 5, 2001: Greg Hill and Oscar Irvin.

Prayer requests include: the unsaved everywhere, all the requests made in this morning's service, Carl Lawson, Fred Sullivan, Steve Minton, our nation and its leaders, and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Roger Smith led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

Elder Wayne Morgan, chairman of the Committee on Church Letters, requested that Brother Bradley Bowen read the report. The committee now reports 66 churches which they recommend accepting and noted that the letter from Butcher's Valley had not been received, but the letter would be reviewed as soon as it was available. 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 and Elder Sizemore reminded the congregation that only those chosen by their respective churches as delegates are allowed to vote.

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 allowing him to attend his 50th consecutive association and also for the privilege and freedom we have to worship, not only in the association, but in our individual churches as well. He also 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 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 their prayers and their confidence. It is truly an honor and privilege to serve this grand body of God's people. It 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 asked everyone to continue praying for us that the Lord's work would always be first in everything we attempt.

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 Newly Constituted Churches: Ministers - John H. Sybert (chairman), Roger Trent, Greg Hill; Deacons - Billy Jack Johnson, Chris Woods; Laymen - Jimmy Bledsoe and H. C. Johnson.

Committee on Finance: David Jerrell (chairman), Harold Head and Clinton Rutherford.

Committee on Obituaries: Tommy Meade (chairman), Bazzle Manis and Delmas Harris.

Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries: Lewis Baker (chairman), John Arnott, Oscar Irvin, Richard Seiber, John Bowlin, Neal Drinnon and Robert Carter.

Elder Sizemore thanked Rose Chapel for their donation of a tape deck to the association.

The clerk gave a report on the association's web site and thanked Brother Adam Lawson for all his long hours and hard work he has done to create and maintain the website. He also informed the delegation that the insurance company that had written the policy was no longer writing this type of policy. The mobile kitchen, its contents, the tent, chairs and liability have not been insured since the end of August. It was motioned, seconded and voted for the clerk and moderator to continue trying to obtain insurance and to use their discretion in choosing a policy. The motion also included that if no insurance could be obtained to cover everything, then they should try to get a policy to cover the liability of the association officers.

The business being concluded, the delegation was dismissed until Friday morning, October 5, 2001.

Friday Morning, October 5, 2001

While everyone was expecting rain, the Lord blessed us with another beautiful morning to begin our second day of the 149th association. Even better than the weather was His Holy Spirit that came down upon all His children. Sister Zula McCullough led us in singing hymns of praise to the Lord. We must get ready for that day when Jesus shall appear. It won't be very long until we will be with Him to thank Him for His matchless love. As we tarry here and watch for Him, we are guided by His unseen hand. Aren't you so glad that Jesus loves you?

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, greeted everyone with words of welcome and thanks unto God for His wonderful spirit. Oh, what a Savior we serve! He knows our every need and is that friend that will never leave us, nor forsake us.

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 Committee on Church Letters gave its final report, having received the letter from Butcher's Valley. After reviewing the letter, the committee recommended accepting it. It was motioned, seconded and voted to accept the recommendations of the committee and seat those delegates appointed by the church as part of the voting body. This brings the total number of churches lettering into the association to 67. As this was the committee's final report, they were dismissed.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Church Letters for the year 2002 which includes: Bradley Bowen (chairman); Paul Johnson, David Horton and Marvin Ketron (alternate).

The Clear Springs Quartet blessed us with their songs and wonderful testimonies. To heaven there will be no end, for when He beckons us home we are there to stay. He takes the lonely sinner and touches his fevered brow and one day His mighty hand will move us to our new home. It is truly a joy to know we are nearing the shore of God's heavenly city, for it is our real home where the King of all glory is waiting on us. Our life is like a flower - soon its beauty fades away, but when Jesus comes that morning to take us home, our soul will take flight on silver wings.

Elder Sizemore thanked God for the wonderful singing and remembered Brother Denzel Stewart as he was well represented by two of the singers in the quartet. Let us hold the banner of God high in everything we do.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all those made in yesterday's services, Ralph Moore's dad, the lost at Astoria Road United Baptist Church where Brother Ken Murphy is pastor, Jerry Moore's brother-in-law, family of

Cecil Price in Romania as missionaries and missionaries everywhere, Jess Akens Jr., Lillie Akens, Geniveve Jones, Roy Jones' sons, Joshua and Justin, John Turner's son, Howard Sybert, the young man that got saved in the service last night and a host of unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Hasco Jenkins led us to the throne of grace in a soul stirring prayer.

Having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, Elder Oscar Irvin came forward to take the first part of the service. After thanking everyone for their thoughts, prayers and cards during his mother's sickness and death, he read Isaiah 40:12-31 and used verse 18 as a thought '*To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?*' We worship the true and living God, so we must never fail to pray. While we know God has all power, we must realize that Satan is on hand ready and willing to deceive us with cunning and near perfect ways. Not everyone that cries Lord, Lord belongs to God, for you must be born again to obtain eternal life with Jesus Christ. The harvest is at hand, let us not fail to gather it in. He paid a debt we were unable to pay. He led His people out of bondage and He will lead us too if we trust in Him. Lord, help us to sow the good seed that we may reap precious souls in God's harvest. Let us humble ourselves and go weeping that we may return rejoicing. We have to trust Him for everything. Never forget the purpose why we gather at God's house, to worship Him in truth and spirit. Elder Greg Hill followed with another glorious message from the Lord. He is still God and He is still saving. There is nothing we know of that we might even try to compare God to. He made all things and His thoughts and ways are so far above ours, we cannot begin to understand them all. God is merciful to us, whom shall we liken Him unto? His glory is revealed in His word, for it is the power of salvation. God's power is revealed through His word and His goodness is round about us. If you don't know Him now, know that His word tells us every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, so you will know Him. Please don't wait until it is too late. There's a land that is fairer than day where we will go one day after while.

The congregation rejoiced and sang several songs as we fellowshiped, then we were adjourned for lunch.

Friday Afternoon, October 5, 2001

The host church served us another lunch fit for a king, and shortly thereafter the congregation gathered in the tent for the afternoon service. Sister Zula McCullough led us as we sang praise to our Savior. Some day all our voices will blend and the troubles and trials of this life will be over in that land where we will never grow old. When misgivings darken our way and old Satan just plain gets us down, that's when He whispers sweet peace to us. What a wonderful Savior we serve!

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, blessed us with a wonderful song and preaching from the Lord above. Jesus didn't come here to stay, just to show us the way then he got on a cloud and went home. We see

His majesty in everything about us, no matter where we look we see God in all things. God left us here that the world might see Jesus in our life. We should all strive to humble ourselves and center our minds on the things of God that others might see Him in us. May we never apologize for obeying the Holy Spirit of God.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all those made in earlier services, Jimmy Dean Minor, Eunice Robinette, Clifford Ash and his sister-in-law, Lona Robinette, Jarvis Sizemore, Jack Sizemore and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Many wonderful testimonies and prayer requests were given that the clerk was unable to write them all down, but God heard and knows about each one. Brother Jim Bowlin 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: Roger Trent, David Smith and Jerry Johnson.

Rose Chapel: Terry Sizemore, Greg Hill and Neal Drinnon.

Fairview (Bellbrook): Tommy Meade, Delmas Harris, Bob Brown, Woodrow Fields and Frank Gilliam.

Macedonia: Oscar Irvin and Jonathan Buttry.

Stand, Saturday morning, October 6, 2001: John Henry Sybert and Terry Sizemore.

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

The Committee on Finance reported \$5,205 in receipts for the year.

The Committee on Obituaries reported that 70 had been received at this time.

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

Elder Sizemore thanked the committees for their work and discharged them after their reports were given.

Elder Arry Hickman came forward to read the circular letter. Its message was to each of us concerning faith in our daily lives and what strong faith can accomplish in our life. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print it in the minutes as read.

Elder Sizemore appointed 3 of our youngest pastors to prepare the circular letter for 2002. They are: Elders Jonathan Buttry, David Smith and Shane Russell.

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.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Electrical and PA Systems which includes: Delmer McPherson (chairman) Elder Carl Lawson, Elder Howard Sybert, Scott Mellons, Bobby Caudill, Elder Roger Smith, Danny Lawson and Elder David Jerrell (alternate).

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

There were 9 churches that asked for the association to meet with them in 2002. Two of these withdrew before the plea process leaving Blackwater Lick, Clear Springs, House Chapel, Long Hollow, Richardson Chapel, Riverside and Swan Creek. During the plea process six other churches withdrew, leaving the vote between Blackwater Lick and Clear Springs. By a clear majority the delegation sent the association to Blackwater Lick, where the Lord willing we will convene on Thursday morning (October 3, 2002) before the first Saturday in October, 2002. Introductory - Elder David Smith; Alternate - Elder Bob Brown.

Adjourned until Saturday morning, October 6, 2001.

Saturday Morning, October 6, 2001

After Friday night's rain, the air was unusually brisk but the spirit of God warmed the hearts of His children as we met for the memorial service. Many smiling faces were lit up with the bright sunshine as everyone gathered in the tent, still rejoicing from the abundant blessings of our daily services here and at the local churches. The old redemption story insures us that when we repented of our sins, we won the victory in Jesus. Our precious Redeemer first loved us so much that He sought us and bought us with His redeeming blood. Some glad morning when this life is over, we'll fly away to our haven of rest.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, welcomed everyone to our memorial service while thanking God for all the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. Our life is sort of like the seasons in that we move through

the stages of life in much the same manner. We go through winter looking forward to spring when everything comes back to life, just like God's children look forward to the resurrection of all God's children. Be thankful that God spared us to meet again that we might worship and praise Him. Today we honor the lives and memory of our dear departed saints of God that have passed from this life to eternity. Yes, we are sad at their passing, but let us rejoice in knowing they are with our Savior.

The delegation was called to order to transact the business.

The moderator read the report from the Committee on Religious Exercises and released the committee, since it was their final report.

Stand tonight: Shane Russell, Travis VanHoose and Jerry Allen Johnson.

Fairview (Bellbrook): Jerry Johnson and Terry Sizemore.

Rose Chapel: John Arnott and Delmas Harris.

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

Elder Bill VanHoose, pastor of the host church, thanked everyone for meeting here with Clear Springs. He also thanked the other churches here in Ohio for all their help along with the association moderator, clerk and former moderator for their work.

The moderator reminded the congregation that Sister Eileen Brown sends out a regular announcement to the churches about revivals that are in progress or about to begin. Just let her know about any upcoming revivals and she will add it to her announcement.

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, Jason Nichols, Makala Michaels, Tommy Lawson, David Nichols, Ralph Lawson, Jim Burke, Jimmy Huff, Andrew Mellons, Martha Perry and her family, Jim Murphy and his wife, Brother Smith's family, Shane Murphy and his wife, John Turner's family, Beulah Barnett, Reba Bledsoe, Charlene Mitchell's daughter-in-law's family and a host of unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Carson Johnson led us to the throne of grace.

Sister Leona Kester blessed us with her testimony and song of praise. We are on our way to our new home to be with Jesus forever. How precious is His promise that we'll soon be home with Jesus to part no more.

The memorial service has been a part of this association since 1956. The moderator read the names of those dear departed saints which we remember today. Even though they are greatly missed, we praise God for 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 and blessed us with his wonderful testimony and song of praise. God has truly blessed this man that has been on this way for so long. He thanked God for allowing him to attend his 68th consecutive association. He read from the 116th Psalm, verses 1 - 16, using the 15th verse as a thought *'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.'* How true this verse is because the soul goes back to the Lord which giveth it. Every soul that knows the Lord is precious in His sight. When one of God's children dies, His angels carry their spirit home to God. His word tells us to be careful not to offend one of these little ones of mine. These are they that come up through great tribulation. Sorrow not for those that sleep in Jesus, for they will be called up first, then those that remain, to meet the Lord in the sky. May we never fail to give Him all the praise and glory for everything. Elder Terry Sizemore followed with some words of praise for our Savior. After such wonderful preaching he felt it not necessary that anymore should be done. Elder Jason Robinette lead the congregation in singing Palms of Victory as everyone rejoiced and praised the magnificent God we serve. What a time was had by all in attendance at today's service. Thank God for all the ministers He has called to go forth and preach the gospel.

The moderator did not dismiss the congregation but told them to obey the Lord. After several songs, many tears of joy and much rejoicing, the congregation left the tent. After a wonderful lunch, those that stayed continued to rejoice. While the contents of the tent were being removed for storage, many songs were sung in honor and praise of our blessed Redeemer. This is just a foretaste of what waits for the children of God, Oh won't it be wonderful there. Don't wait until we get to heaven but rejoice, praise and enjoy salvation now.

Sunday Morning, October 7, 2001

Once again God blessed His children as they gathered for the last day of this 149th annual session. Everyone was still praising His name for the soul that was saved on Saturday night. This grand body has been blessed beyond measure during this gathering. Services were opened with the congregation praising God through songs of Zion. Will you meet me over yonder? is a question every individual must ask themselves and know the answer to. What a time that will be when we gather to be with the Lord forever. God's children must continue to press on for it won't be very long until that great reunion day.

Elder Bill VanHoose, pastor of the host church, opened the service praising the Lord and welcoming God's people. Words cannot describe how good the Lord has been to His people, for we are truly blessed.

Prayer requests include all those made in previous services plus many more as Elder Roger VanHoose led us to the throne of grace.

We were further blessed with special singing from the Eternal Bound Quartet, Clear Springs youth and Valerie Shaver. Some day in the not too distant future we will take that "Flight Without An Airplane" where we can say thank God I'm free and glory in His name forever. Sometimes we need a wall of faith, sometimes a wall of grace, but always that wall of prayer is open to His children where we can proclaim bless the Lord, bless His holy name.

The preaching service opened with Elder Shane Russell coming forward and using as his thought, God's people being a "peculiar people." If we follow the Lord, we are indeed a peculiar people. The world looks at us through a different light and so they consider us to be peculiar. If we follow the world in all they do, we are no different but when they look upon us as being somewhat peculiar we know we are closer to God's will. Let us not stray from the narrow way He has set before us. Elder Terry Sizemore followed using the same text. The spirit was wonderful throughout the entire service. An altar call was given. The church was then dismissed to gather at the river.

God blessed Elder Bill VanHoose as he seated the church and sister churches of the same faith and order to conduct the baptizing. The opening song "Blessed Assurance" opened the spirit of God upon His people. Elder Sizemore led prayer and then sang "I Will Follow" as the first candidate was led into the water. The spirit of God moved in and some came to the river's edge and prayed for salvation, some rededicated their lives unto Jesus and others who were saved but needed baptism wanted to join the church. A total of 20 people were baptized. Elder Bill VanHoose closed in prayer and Elder Terry Sizemore sang "Make The Lord a Good Soldier."

It is truly a blessing to receive word that another soul has come to know the Lord as their personal Savior. This is what it is all about. It lets us know for assuredly that God still saves and we can rejoice in knowing another soul has escaped an eternity of pain and torture and instead will receive one of joy, happiness and peace with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Much appreciation goes from the clerk to Elder Bill VanHoose for his excellent notes and write-up of Sunday's services. I really appreciate his willingness to help me in my absence and I thank God for him and Clear Springs Church.

What a day that will be! So many times we hear people talking about what a time we'll have when we get to heaven and while this is true, we need to focus on today. God has blessed us so wonderfully throughout this great event and He is willing to do this each and every day if we'll just let Him. Let's not wait on others to do this or do that, but step out when God bids us to. I know with everything that is within me that He will bless His people if they will just allow Him to. Many were not able or chose not to go to the association this year. All I can say is that you missed a wonderful time in the Lord. One more association is now history and I can't remember when I have been treated as I was at Clear Springs. I felt like royalty, even though I sure didn't deserve it. The Lord has so richly blessed all those involved with the care and work of the association and He will continue to do so. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart

for all your hard work and attention to details that you have put into this event. I know I speak for the entire association when I say what a magnificent time in the Lord this has been. Such a special group of people I know of nowhere. I have traveled to many meetings and conferences in my work, but there are none that can even compare to meeting with this grand body. Even with all the work involved each year, I look so forward to this blessed event. By sitting up front I can pretty much see things from all angles. I see the nervousness of those up front, until the spirit takes hold, I see your smiling faces and even the laughter before it starts and during lunch assuring me of the happiness we have in the Lord. We can ask for nothing more than for His presence here with us. I praise His holy name for allowing me to do this little part for Him and His people, and for being with us and also for each one of you and what you mean to me. I don't have the words to truly describe what each of you mean to me, but please know for sure you are near and dear to my heart. Let us continue to pray for the requests made during this association and remember our young people each time we pray to Almighty God. As you read these words, I pray the Holy Spirit will bless you as much as it did me while writing them and allow you to take it in the same spirit in which it was written. Let us stand firm and steadfast and proclaim His name in everything we do that He may receive all the praise, glory and honor. If we do this, then we will see many souls come to know the Lord. May He richly bless each and every one of you until we meet again.