

PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Thursday Morning, October 4, 2012

The Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists convened in its 160th annual session with Fairview Church, Bellbrook, Ohio.

Over 70 years ago people from various mountain sections of Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky began to migrate to this area of Ohio as they sought a more prosperous way of life. Many found employment in industrial plants in this area and established their homes and farms in the vicinity.

Although they were enjoying their new homes and better means of earning a living, there was something not quite to their satisfaction. They visited various churches and sought to worship with them, but there was a spiritual atmosphere they had known previously that was missing from them here. They started having services in their homes, in groves or wherever a building could be found when weather conditions prevented them from meeting outside. As they enjoyed these services, a need for a church building of their own was felt.

The location where the church now is, and where an old church building had stood many years ago with an adjoining cemetery, was offered to them and arrangements were made for it to become the permanent location of a band of Primitive Baptist people. This was made possible with the help of "Uncle" George Driskel, who owned the land. Although he was a member of another organization, he was a true friend of this church.

The original building was erected and in August, 1938, the church was formally organized with the help of Elders E. A. Robinette, W. H. Burke, H. V. Hall and J. H. Sybert. The building was dedicated, and the first Union Meeting held. The church was admitted to the Eastern District Association in October, 1938, with 37 members on the roll.

The original 18 charter members included Brothers Orbin Barnett, Claude Barnett, Clyde Barnett, Jesse Barnett, Dewey Bledsoe, Hammie Fleenor, Lewis Joyner, Bryan Moore, Rhea Johnson, and Clarence Slagle; and Sisters Minnie Barnett, Hattie Barnett, Helen Barnett-Slagle, Lillie Bledsoe, Ollie Fleenor, Mary Gilliam, Euna Joyner and Mary Moore. These brothers and sisters have all gone on to be with the Lord.

The original building was remodeled and improved from time to time. The present building was completed and dedicated in November, 1965. The old building is presently being used as a Fellowship Hall. Present membership is 158.

Elder Clarence Slagle, who was the first pastor, served in that capacity the greater part of the time until 1976, and others who have served as pastor include the following: Elders Joe Dean, Frank Brown, Roland Callahan, Charles Roller, Luther Abrams, Bryan Moore, Elmer Parsons, Crawford Sage, Ron Bledsoe, Kenneth Mitchell, and Hasco Jenkins. Current pastors are Elders Jason Robinette and Joseph Robinette, his son and assistant.

The first Deacons included Brothers Orbin Barnett, Lewis Joyner and Bryan Moore, who all are at rest with the Lord. The influence from their guidance is still remembered and felt here. Others who have served as Deacons in the past were Brothers Owsley, Leonard Davis, Homer Lovins, Jim Osborne, Crawford Sage, Bobby Taylor, William Vanover, Kyle Vanzant, Ron Bledsoe, Kenneth

Mitchell, Emerson Browning, and Morris Giles. Current Deacons are Brothers Ray Eldridge and Eldon "Sonny" Wallen.

Brother Lewis Joyner was the first Clerk/Treasurer and served the church well until moving to Florida in 1966. The next Clerk was Sister Virginia Hall Osborne, daughter of Elder Hobart Hall, who served until her untimely death in January, 1974. Next was Sister Berneda Moore Vanover, daughter of Elder Bryan Moore, who served until 1979 when she moved to Tennessee. She was followed by Sister Betty Barnett Livingston, granddaughter of Brother Orbin Barnett, who served until 1982. She was succeeded by Brother Kenneth Mitchell, until his untimely death in 2002. He was succeeded by his wife, Sister Charlene Slagle Mitchell, who is still serving as Clerk, with Bro. Sonny Wallen as her Assistant.

In 1950 Sister Georgia Moore Sage, daughter of Elder Bryan Moore, was elected as Treasurer, and served well until her death in 2008. The current Treasurer is Betty Barnett Livingston, with Brother Keith Sage, son of Georgia Sage, as her Assistant.

Presently serving as Trustees are Brothers Eldon "Sonny" Wallen, Cleve Mitchell, Joseph Robinette and Lester Wayne Osborne. Trustees who served over the years include Brothers Orbin Barnett, Bryan Moore, Claude Baker, Harry Brown, Cleveland Slagle, John Osborne, Lace Maynard, Homer Lovins, Kenneth Mitchell, Ron Bledsoe, George Livingston, Morris Mounts, William Webb, Leonard Davis, Dewey Bledsoe, Sherman Cole, Dale Cole, Chuck Davis, Warren Kail and Eric Mitchell.

In the name of the Lord, we thank each of you here today and all those who have gone ahead of us to meet the Lord, for the strength and guidance you have given this church throughout the years.

The setting of this association is the 5th time the association has met with this church since it came to be a part of this body. We take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks to all sister churches who have in any way assisted in preparing for this 160th annual session of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists. May God's richest blessings be upon you.

For the 160th time, God's children met to worship and praise His holy name. Sister Zula McCullough led us in singing songs of praise to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. What matchless love He showed to us with the anguish He bore. We all were sinking deep in sin and nothing else could help until His love lifted us out of the miry clay. There is wonder working power in the precious blood of the Lamb that makes us much whiter than snow. The unseen hand will lead us thru ways we cannot see; for as it leads we'll have no fear. We long to see our Master's face and some sweet day we'll reach that golden strand to praise Him for His guiding hand. There is a country to which we are going where there is joy without measure, for Heaven holds all. Keep your lamps all trimmed and burning; for the bridegroom watch and wait where we'll meet in the morning just inside the eastern gate. The joy of that glad meeting helps us consider His awesome wonder, and His power displayed throughout the universe as our soul sings to proclaim how great thou art!

Welcoming everyone to today's 160th gathering, Elder Terry Sizemore thanked God for all the blessings of this life asking everyone to let there be joy and love for the Lord. No one can welcome you like God. What have we come for today? We pray the response would be to witness to our people as they become aware of His presence and see our people saved.

Elder Sizemore mentioned the passing of Elder Bobby Williams since we last met. Another soldier has gone home, but we thank God for knowing him and being able to listen to his singing and

preaching of God's word. As time goes on, we must continue to carry the bloodstained banner for Christ until He calls us home.

The Letter Committee from last year consists of Bradley Bowen (chairman), Steve Minton, Ralph Baker and Billy Walton (alternate). The moderator asked the churches to turn in their church letters, obituaries, and financial contributions as soon as possible so the letter committee will have time to complete their review.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Religious Exercises which includes Dennis Stewart (chairman), Steve Hunt and Lloyd Morelock.

Elder Daniel Smith blessed us with his song and reminded us that God's presence disperses all gloom and takes us on high where winter and clouds are no more.

Elder Jason Robinette, co-pastor of the host church, welcomed everyone with his song and encouraging words. Somewhere in glory you'll find us singing and shouting throughout eternity. God's spirit will set us free, but from the church at Fairview, Ohio, Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!

Sister Zula led the congregation in singing the old song that is the association's standard song, "Brethren We Have Met Again." Are you waiting for your King, watching till He shall return? Brethren we have met to worship and adore our Lord; for all is vain unless the spirit of the Holy One comes down.

Elder Sizemore also asked that each minister and visiting minister in attendance at the association be sure to sign the minister's book located in front of the clerk's desk.

Prayer requests were made for the lost, our churches, those serving in the military, our country, Thelma Tankersley, Tee Osborne, Daniel Hurd, Mike Fullington, Betty Dotson, Jim Brown, Betty Sizemore, Kathy Robinson, Gerald Jones and his wife, John and Maude Turner, lady on life support, Clarissa Rose and family, Jim Lykins, Ray and Dottie Eldridge, Georgia Evans, Jason and August Robinette, Thelma Anderson, thanks for Bradley and Juanita Bowen's granddaughter, Stella Sybert, John Bowlin, and Iva Price. Brother Jim Bowlin humbly led us to the throne of grace.

Having been chosen to preach the introductory sermon, Elder Burnice Sybert took the first part of the service. After a wonderful testimony, he asked us to put aside everything except that of the Lord. Try the spirits to know if they are of God. Look at our articles of faith; knowing that every ordained minister and deacon was asked if they believed each one of them during their ordination service. We must believe what has been left to us, for we have a great heritage. Primitive means the original work and we believe our way to be the most like the original church. We are at the re-gathering, not a split. Our churches may be fewer, but our strength is not in numbers, but in our unity with God. Elder Sybert read Deuteronomy 32:1-7, II Tim 2:15, and a portion of verse 3 in Jude using as a thought, "Remember the days of old rightly dividing the word of truth and earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints." God will fight our battles today, just as He did in the days of Moses. They weren't wandering in the wilderness, but they were led by God because of disobedience. Those that followed God were able to go forth and take the land of the giants. Since Moses disobeyed, he was not allowed to go into the Promised Land. Many dear saints that showed us the way have gone home. Let us not run, but fight the fight in God's name. How much do you know about our history of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists? What did our forefathers go through to establish this heritage we enjoy? Since the 1840's when the association was formed, we have reaped the benefits set forth in the early church. The church is the authority that God works through. It is by this authority that we are led and our instructions are as clear as the

day when Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. We should examine ourselves before we take part in the communion service to ensure we are a fit subject and of like faith. It is the will of God that all be saved. When He speaks to an individual, our prayer is that you heed this call and ask Him to save you. Our beliefs have not changed since the beginning.

Elder Scott Tipton followed with a song and another wonderful message. Take our hand precious Lord and lead us home. God's children know His voice and He is still with us. He has never, nor will He ever forsake us. Let us study and know what we have deep in our soul. Elder Tipton read Acts 4:23-31, asking that we speak the word of God with boldness. We do not need the help of the world because we have help from our heavenly Father. Love one another the best way possible with everything that is within us, but love the Lord with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. If we're led by His spirit, we are the sons of God. We must stick together in the ways of the Lord so our friends and family will follow in the path He has set before us. The Holy Spirit will not dwell in an unclean vessel; therefore, do that which is necessary to see our people saved.

We were dismissed for lunch with a song.

Thursday Afternoon, October 4, 2012

The church at Fairview served us a wonderful lunch as God's children enjoyed the beautiful sunshine. The old account was large and growing every day, but the record's clear today for the account was settled down on our knees long ago. To know that Jesus saved us is enough to endure the trials of this life. We will arise and go to Jesus where He will embrace us, for in the loving arms of our dear Savior there are ten thousand charms.

Further blessings were bestowed upon us with special singing and testimony from Terry and Peggy Sizemore. Many times we walk thru dark valleys and we don't understand, but some day we will stand on top of Mt. Zion and understand it all. We'll sing and shout when we reach that city.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone to the afternoon service; our eternal home is a great place to look forward to. From heaven He came, the sins of this world to atone. He showed us the way, then He got on a cloud and went home.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all those made during the morning service, Tommy Meade's son and wife, lady in Circleville, our country and those serving our country and their families, John Turner, H. C. and Pearl Johnson, Kathy Robinson, Jim Brown, our churches, Michael Willis, Gordon Justice's family at the loss of his wife, and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Many wonderful testimonies were made throughout the tent. After a wonderful testimony, Elder Mike Fleenor took us to the throne of grace in a soul stirring prayer.

Brother Bradley Bowen, Chairman of the Committee on Church Letters, came forward to give the report of our state and standing. A total of 37 churches were recommended by the committee to be accepted. 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. It was stated by the chairman, as churches may choose delegates from other churches, that it would be a good thing to change the church letter to read union instead of members. Having just been accepted as the voting body, the motion was withdrawn until the association officials were elected.

The delegation was seated in order to conduct the business of the association.

The moderator asked for nominations to serve as moderator pro-tem during the election of the association officials. Elder Richard Seiber was nominated. It was motioned, seconded and voted by acclamation. It was motioned, seconded and voted for nominations to cease. Elder Seiber came forward to serve during the election.

After a wonderful testimony, the moderator asked for nominations to serve as clerk and treasurer of the association. A nomination was made and seconded for Brother Danny Lawson to serve as clerk and treasurer. It was motioned and seconded for nominations to cease. Through the vote by acclamation, he will serve for the ensuing year.

The moderator pro-tem asked for nominations to serve as moderator of the association. Elder Terry Sizemore was nominated and seconded for him to serve as moderator of the association. It was motioned and seconded for nominations to cease. Through the vote by acclamation, Elder Sizemore will serve as moderator for the ensuing year.

Elder Sizemore thanked Elder Seiber for standing as moderator pro-tem during the election of the association officials. With a vote to reaffirm the elections, Elder Sizemore thanked the delegation for their confidence in him.

Moderator Sizemore asked for permission to speak/comment as needed concerning our articles of faith. He then reviewed our articles of faith and asked each of us to review and recognize that through the Lord these are our foundation. The congregation listened as the moderator read the articles of faith, giving the scriptural references for each. Our churches and individuals agree to this each time they letter into this body.

The moderator asked for a motion and second to allow him to appoint all committees necessary to carry on the business of the association. It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the moderator to appoint any and all such committees.

The Religious Exercise Committee report was read by the moderator and includes:

Thursday night:

Church: Richard Seiber, Lewis Baker and Chris Salley

Clear Springs: Jerry Johnson, Wiley Lampkin and Donald L. Johnson

Macedonia: Terry Sizemore, Oscar Irvin and Greg Hill

Rose Chapel: Daniel Smith and Keith Holt

Friday morning: October 5, 2012

Stand: Daniel Smith and Greg Hill

The moderator appointed the following committees:

Committee on Electrical and PA System: Delmer McPherson (chairman), Scott Mellons, Bobby Caudill, Eric McPherson and Danny Lawson.

Committee on Newly Constituted Churches: Ministers – Scott Tipton (chairman), Joseph Robinette and Roger Manning; Deacons – Johnny Bunch and Jim Bowlin; Laymen – Clarence Dotson and Clifton Horne.

Committee on Finance: Eddie Malone (chairman), Roger VanHoose and Mike Fleenor.

Committee on Obituaries: Jim Lykins (chairman), Jerry Johnson and Carter Hager.

Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries: Oscar Irvin (chairman), Jason Robinette, Lewis Baker, Frank Gilliam, Richard Seiber, Burnice Sybert and David Moody.

Brother Bradley Bowen, chairman of the Letter Committee, returned to the stand to discuss the changes to the church letter. It was recommended that the church letter be changed to reflect the fact that churches may choose delegates from other churches that are members in good standing of an Eastern District Primitive Baptist church. This would be accomplished by rewording a portion of the church letter concerning delegates sent to represent a particular "church" to include: "We have chosen the following named members of our church or association to sit with you in council..." This will allow any member in good standing with a sister church to serve as a delegate for said church. Likewise, the statement below the list of delegates would read: These members are in good standing and full fellowship with their respective church and we ask that you receive them... It was motioned, seconded and voted to have the clerk make the appropriate changes to the church letter.

The moderator reminded the delegation that Excused Absence forms are available at the clerk's desk.

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 to replenish the necessary forms to properly perform his duties.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the clerk \$1500 in appreciation for his services.

The clerk reported all financial transactions during the year to the delegation.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the moderator \$800 in appreciation for his services.

Brother Delmer McPherson, chairman of the Electrical and PA System Committee came forward to give their report. They are experiencing trouble with the new microphone purchased last year. Instead of buying a new one now, they are going to determine if it is still under warranty before purchasing another one. They are also experiencing trouble with the recorder, as it does not always record properly. If we are to continue recording the proceedings, does the delegation want them to purchase a new one? It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow them to use their better judgment to purchase what they need.

The moderator noted changes in our trustees:

- Ohio: Mark Newkirk, Joe Pitzer and Ray Eldridge
- Virginia: Ralph Baker, Roy Jones and Jim Bowlin
- Tennessee: Steve Hunt, Earl Dotson and Billy Walton
- Kentucky: Bobby Caudill, Roger Sturgill and John Banks

It was motioned, seconded and voted that the host church will be responsible for the maintenance of the kitchen, with any needed repair costs to be reimbursed by the clerk from association funds.

The clerk gave a report concerning the Ayers Chapel Church property. An appraisal of the property has been completed. A lawyer is preparing papers to obtain the deed to the property, including a formal search for the original deed. It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the moderator, clerk, and Virginia trustees to handle the sale of the property.

The business being concluded, the delegation was dismissed until Friday morning, October 5, 2012.

Friday Morning, October 5, 2012

The Lord blessed us to gather for one more time this side of eternity. Sister Zula McCullough came forward to lead the congregation in singing several hymns of praise to our Lord and Savior. Over in the glory land, we'll join the happy angel band. When we are cast down in spirit and soul, that still small voice whispers sweet peace to us. Christ has regarded our helpless estate and our sins, not in part, but the whole is nailed to His cross. We bear that sin no more; thank God it is well with our soul! Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus Christ, for it is on Him, the solid rock, that we stand as all other ground is sinking sand. Some day when we've traveled our last mile here, we'll enter the lifeboat that will carry us over the sea. He'll hold to our hand as over death's river we go.

The congregation was blessed with special singing and wonderful testimony from Billy Marcum and the host church singers. We escaped an awful place when Jesus saved our soul. He took our part and because of that, the only fire we'll ever feel is burning within our heart. On a mountain of sin we traveled so long, but the Savior came in and gave us a song. We may know the time, and we can show you the place, but we cannot tell how or why, but He will tell us all about it in the by and by. We will never forget when He spoke to us gently while we were out in sin with no hope or peace within, till Jesus gladly set us free. Trouble and sorrow will vanish away, for we are redeemed by love divine. Great is our joy as onward we go with Jesus as our guide. Precious indeed is our Savior to us and to Him we resign all. Let us look up, for our redemption draweth nigh when deliverance will come and palms of victory we shall wear. We can't walk, nor can we talk without Jesus.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone to today's service, giving his appreciation for everyone that came this way. Thank God for the wonderful singers and songs of praise. The spiritual testimonies let us know He is here with us.

Prayer requests were made for the unsaved, all the requests from yesterday, those serving our country in the military, our association, our country, many wonderful testimonies were given thanking God for His blessings, Marie Mann, Daniel Hurd, John Turner, Mike Fullington, Clarissa Rose's family, Thelma Tankersley, ladies friend Teresa who suffered heart attack, Flo Minton and family, Jim Brown family, Kathy Robinson, and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Jerry Johnson took our petitions to the throne of 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. It was motioned, seconded and voted to accept the changes to the church letter as recommended by the Letter Committee.

Elder Daniel Smith, having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, came forward to take the first part of the service. After a wonderful testimony he read I Corinthians 3:5-13 and Nehemiah 2:17 using as a thought, "Let us rise up and build." Times have changed, but God has not. No matter how many trials we face, just build on the foundation of God. When Jerusalem lay in waste as the walls were destroyed and the gates were burned, Nehemiah mourned because of all the troubles. We ask our Lord and He delivers in His own way at His own time. Don't worry about the things of this world, but lift up the name of Jesus. God has blessed throughout the existence of the

association and will continue to do so. God is good today just as He has always been, so get back to the things of God. We may get knocked down, but God is on hand to help us up again. Our ministers must preach salvation to a lost and dying world to get back to the things of God. There is no place to quit, only to continue the work of the Lord. We have a weapon in Christ Jesus and we can still work for Him today. We are on a journey for the Lord; the gospel has not changed one jot or one tittle. We can't build on our self, but we must build on the Lord.

Elder Greg Hill followed with a song and message from on high. Although we were sinking in despair, our Savior eased our pain, bore our grief, and all our guilt and fear was gone. He is God in the valley just as He is on the mountain. Look up, be the children of God for we know He will go with us always. He knows our thoughts afar off. Regardless of where our travels may take us, God is there; for He will never leave us nor forsake us. When Balak looked out and saw the children of Israel, he knew he could not defeat God's people. The world would like to see God's work fail, but that is not possible, for His word will stand forever. He delivers us out of harm's way. God will provide whatsoever we need throughout this life and throughout eternity. Those that wait upon the Lord shall run and not be weary, and those who look unto the Lord knoweth from whence cometh all their help. We may not know of everything in this world, but we know of old time salvation by grace through faith. Drink from His fountain and you'll never thirst again. One may plant, another may sow, but only God gives the increase. Let whosoever cometh, drink of the water of life freely.

The congregation sang songs of praise as we were adjourned for lunch. God's amazing grace is sufficient for all our needs. The service didn't really break, it just moved over the grounds as shouts of praise and tears of joy were all around. Bless His holy name!

Friday Afternoon, October 5, 2012

The congregation assembled in the tent after a wonderful lunch served by the host church as everyone continued to praise the Lord. When our work here is done and our life's crown is won, we'll go to a land where we'll never grow old. In the sweet by and by, we will meet on that beautiful shore to draw nearer to our Blessed Redeemer. To our bountiful Father above, we will offer our tribute of praise and live throughout eternity.

We were further blessed with special singing and testimony from Amy Tipton Bledsoe, Kristi VanHoose Robinette, Moore family and Leona Kester. Just look around and see the good things He has done for us. His blessings are given freely and He has been so good to us; we owe it all to Him. We truly have so much to thank Him for. Regardless of how we may look, we are rich as a king. Even with a new garment that's never been worn or a mansion in glory; give me Jesus, for He is the treasure that money can't buy. When you're in trouble and don't know what to do, just call on Jesus and He will carry you through and show you the way. God raised the waters in Moses' time and He will do the same for us, to allow us to conquer our giant. God in Daniel's time is still God today.

Elder Sizemore thanked the church for a bountiful and delicious lunch and thanked God for His spirit and the fact of knowing He is alive forevermore. Our Godly heritage is worth all our efforts. Respect the Holy Spirit that it remains with us always and know that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Prayer requests were made for all those in the previous services, the unsaved, all those serving our country in the military and their families, Henrietta Adams, Kyle Robinette and family and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Many testimonies were given to honor and praise our

Blessed Redeemer. Elder Roger VanHoose took our petitions to the Lord in an earnest and heartfelt prayer.

The delegation was seated in order to transact the business.

Brother Bradley Bowen gave the final report of the Letter Committee. There were no other churches to report.

The moderator appointed the Church Letter Committee for 2013 which includes: Steve Minton (chairman), Ralph Baker, Billy Walton and Joe Robinette (alternate).

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

Friday night:

Church: Joseph Robinette and Chris Russell

Clear Springs: Terry Sizemore, Oscar Irvin and Burnice Sybert

Saturday morning, October 6, 2012:

Stand: Harold Shaw and Terry Sizemore

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

The Committee on Finance reported \$4,676.60 in receipts for the year. The chairman thanked each church and individual for their contributions. He mentioned that our finances were less this time and asked everyone to make an additional contribution to the association if they felt led to do so.

The Committee on Obituaries reported that 47 have been received at this time.

The Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries reported that no queries had been received.

The men chosen to write the circular letter for 2012 did not letter into the association this year. Elder Sizemore offered a reprint of the 1956 circular letter, if it would meet the association's approval. It was motioned, seconded and voted for him to read a preface he wrote, as well as the circular letter. The moderator read the preface and the circular letter of 1956 written by then moderator, Elder John H. Sybert. Its message was to strive for a time of peace, harmony and unity in our ranks brought forth through God's leadership back to the association's beginning. The history contained in this letter provides without any doubt exactly what our association believes. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print the preface and the circular letter in the minutes as read.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Circular Letters for 2013 which includes: Elders Greg Hill, Oscar Irvin and Roger VanHoose.

Elder Burnice Sybert came forward to address the association regarding the ordination of ministers and deacons. There is concern that ministers leaving our association might think they are covered by our association insurance. Since these ministers and deacons did not surrender their ordination papers, we need to provide legal notice concerning their standing with the association. Upon advice of legal counsel, he read a prepared letter and statement.

Following the annual gathering of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists in 2011, which also serves as the annual meeting of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists, Inc., the clerk wrote each of the churches which had formed a new association to request the Certificate of Ordination issued to their deacons be returned to the Association. He also wrote each minister

whose membership was with these churches and requested they return their Certificate of Ordination. All refused to return them saying they had sought legal counsel and had been told they did not have to do so as an ordination could not be revoked.

Believing this statement to be incorrect, the Association then sought legal counsel, providing a copy of the Association Charter, a copy of the 2011 Minutes, a copy of the Certificate of Ordination for Deacon, and a copy of the Certificate of Ordination for Minister. Counsel confirmed that in the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists, ordination is only valid so long as the minister or deacon is a member of a church in the Association. The Certificate of Ordination is a binding legal contract between the local church (and Association) and the minister or deacon who is ordained. The Presbytery acts on behalf of the local church (and Association) and affixes their signatures to the document. The minister then signs the document with this oath: "In receiving this Certificate of Ordination, I hereby agree to conduct my moral and spiritual life in such a way as to promote peace and harmony in the church and association of which I am a member. I also agree that, if at any time I find that I cannot honestly and sincerely do so, I will return this Certificate to the Church and cease to be a member of this organization." The deacon signs with this oath: "I hereby agree to fill this office faithfully. When I can no longer do so I will immediately return this certificate of ordination." Both documents state plainly that the ordination is according to the rules contained in the Minutes of the Eastern District Association.

Counsel to the Association gave 2 options. Option 1 is to go to court and sue for the return of the certificates. The Association believes the instructions given by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 6 that a brother should not go to law against a brother, but that it is better to suffer wrongfully. We also believe ministers and deacons have a special obligation to honor their word, and had this been done, neither option would be necessary. Option 2 is to serve legal notice to the deacons by printing in the Minutes of the Association of 2012 the names of the churches which have broken covenant and withdrawn fellowship from the Eastern District Association, and, by printing their names in the Minutes of the Association of 2012, serve legal notice to the ministers that their ordination in the Eastern District Association is forfeited and all rights and privileges which were theirs as ministers in the Eastern District Association are also forfeited.

The clerk, by mail, shall also serve this notice by informing each church as agent for the deacons and the ministers individually of this action.

The following churches have either joined another association, stated by their own written word that they have withdrawn fellowship from the Association, or have failed to represent themselves for two consecutive years in the Association: Blair Chapel (Blair, KY), Butcher's Valley (Rogersville, TN), Coyle's Branch (Gordon, KY), Guthrie's Gap (Bulls Gap, TN), House Chapel (Rogersville, TN), Hurricane Valley (Gordon, KY), Jenkins Chapel (Surgoinsville, TN), Liberty Chapel (Mt. Carmel, TN), Oak Grove (Bulls Gap, TN), Pilgrim's Rest (Rogersville, TN), Pink Hill (Surgoinsville, TN), Slate Hill (Mooresburg, TN) and Sulphur Springs (Rogersville, TN).

The names of the ministers and their church affiliation as it last appeared in either the Minutes of the Eastern District Association or a minute of another association which they have joined: Von Burton (Sulphur Springs), Glenn Cornett (Hurricane Valley), Phil Crittenden (Oak Grove), Russell Davidson (Jenkins Chapel), Neal Drinnon (House Chapel), Woodrow Fields (Blair Chapel), Fred Gilreath (Jenkins Chapel), Wayne Gulley (Guthrie's Gap), Greg Harr (House Chapel), Arry Hickman (Pilgrim's Rest), James Jarnigan (Slate Hill), Jamie Jarnigan (Slate Hill), Robert Jarnigan (Slate Hill), Adam Justice (Sulphur Springs), Gordon Justice (Pilgrim's Rest), Larry Miller (Guthrie's Gap), Roger Purkey (Slate Hill), Rod Raleigh (Blair Chapel), David Smith (Pilgrim's Rest), Stacy Smith (Guthrie's Gap), Richard Watts (Pink Hill) and Bill Winstead (Sulphur Springs).

It was motioned, seconded and voted to print these recommendations and for the clerk to send the letter to each minister and church clerk for notification of the respective church deacons.

To the churches that did not letter in this year, a letter to warn of some possible pitfalls is as follows: The Association, while not understanding what any church hoped to accomplish by not lettering to the Association, believes it is necessary to warn the churches which chose not to do so of some possible pitfalls. As it has already been stated, ministers and deacons who are not members of a church represented in the Association have no legal rights to exercise that office. This especially applies to being a pastor and conducting church business and to officiating in weddings, depending on the laws of each state.

Each church should also consider the consequence if the need arises for a new pastor. The ministers of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists are only licensed to pastor and conduct the ordinances of a church which is in the Association. If the church wishes to have a union meeting, with whom is the church united or in union?

Therefore it is advised the Association grant a year of grace to those churches which do not join another association, but for whatever reason failed to letter in this year. The ministers names will not appear in the Ministers List, but the Association will not call for their credentials if the church where they hold membership letters in 2013.

If a letter is not received in 2013, the same action taken this year with the 13 churches will also be forthcoming.

If there are members of any church which left the fellowship of the Association who desire to continue as a member church in the Association, the Association may well consider them to be the true church and provide them with all help possible.

The Association offers this advice in love and desires to continue to fellowship with all churches which do not deviate from our faith and practice as stated in the Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum and Church Covenant.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to follow these recommendations, and make them a perpetual procedure.

Elder Sybert made the delegation aware of the issues involved with churches, dealing with how churches are deeded. There is a legal process to amend a deed to state if it ever ceases to be a member of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists, then the church property would revert back to the association. It was motioned, seconded and voted for the Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee trustees to check the official deed of record of those churches not lettering into the association or having joined another association to determine if they can leave the association according to official records on file in their respective state.

Each minister and pastor must stand for truth and let their members who may have questions know exactly what has happened during these trying times. Answer their question truthfully and if you don't know the answer, seek the proper council of God and your fellow ministers.

The moderator reminded those serving on the committees that they were released when their final report is given.

The greatest news of any association meeting is to see a lost soul come to know the Lord. Today we were blessed to know that a young lady accepted Christ as her personal Savior. No greater news can ever be told, bless the name of the Lord!

The moderator reminded the delegation that only those chosen or appointed by their respective churches as delegates were allowed to vote. There were 3 churches that asked for the association to meet with them next year. These are: Blackwater Lick, Clear Springs and Richardson Chapel. Before the plea process began, Richardson Chapel withdrew. During the plea process, Clear Springs withdrew, sending the association to Blackwater Lick (Big Door) Church where the Lord willing we will convene on Thursday morning, (October 3, 2013) before the first Saturday in October, 2013. Introductory – Elder Daniel Hurd, Alternate – Elder Porter Carroll.

Adjourned until Saturday morning, October 6, 2012.

Saturday Morning, October 6, 2012

After a rainy night, the beautiful sunshine greeted everyone as they gathered in the church for the memorial service. Sister Zula McCullough led the congregation in several songs of joy and praise for our Savior. Some sweet day we'll sing up there the song of victory. He sought us and bought us and all our love is due Him. Peace! Peace! Such wonderful peace sweeps over our spirit in fathomless billows of love. That will be a happy day when all the clouds are passed away, the home gates swing open and we shall be free from all our cares.

Wonderful blessings were received from special singing and wonderful testimony from the Copper Creek Church singers, members of the host church, Jason Robinette and Naomi Payne, Sammy VanHoose, and the Clear Springs Church singers. We may be bent and battered from the storms of this life, but just like the old ship of Zion we will soon reach heaven, for our captain is Jesus Christ. The model church is filled with the Holy Spirit, and is not built for show. Let us be bold in the Lord and keep His commandments that He would receive all the praise, honor and glory for it all. When we lay aside this beaten body, our life will just begin in that shining land which is just ahead; for our race is almost run. Life is easy on the mountain, but when we're down in the valley don't lose faith, for we're never alone. The God of the mountain is still God in the valley. When things go wrong, He'll make them right, because He is God of the day and God in the night. When we reach heaven, we can tell him our life has been sweet, one of harmony and peace. Jesus came in, rescued us and gave us a brand new life. It seems we can hear the blessed Savior say, "What sins are you talking about, for I don't remember them anymore." He's our all in all and whenever we are in trouble, He's the One we call. If you've been washed in the blood of Jesus, then we'll meet again on heaven's bright shore.

Elder Terry Sizemore welcomed everyone to our memorial service. It has been such a wonderful place to be. God truly blessed His children during this gathering, especially with another precious soul coming to know the Lord.

Remember in prayer the lost, the requests made in previous services, our young people, all those serving our country in the military and their families, our friends and loved ones missed at this gathering, and our local community too, Little Cowan Church, Marie Mann, our new Christian saved during this association, Jim Brown, Kathy Robinson, Daniel Hurd, Thelma Tankersley, Mike Fullington and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands. Elder Oscar Irvin led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer. Thank God for the many wonderful testimonies throughout the building.

The delegation was seated in order to transact the business.

Elder Jason Robinette, co-pastor of the host church, came forward thanking God for the presence of His Holy Spirit. He also thanked all those who helped, especially his wife and all the ladies who worked so hard, many local businesses and surrounding community businesses, as well as everyone who came this way. Remember all our churches in prayer. Thank God for His presence and our moderator for leading us through this. The liberty of the spirit is freely given that we will know the right path to follow and continue to trust Him in our daily walk.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to adopt the business proceedings of yesterday as read with one addition. The clerk will add David Smith (Pilgrim's Rest) to the list of ministers that are no longer members of the association. It was motioned, seconded, and voted to modify the minutes between now and the publication of minutes if needed.

There was a move to not print Sister Eileen Brown's name and address in the minutes because we were not certain that she desired to continue sending out revival and special service notices, as she has done in the past. It was motioned, seconded and voted for the clerk to check with Sister Brown to see if she is willing to continue. She does wish to continue sending these notices just as she has in the past. Please let her know by the 20th of the month for the announcement to be included in next month's announcements. Individuals and churches should send a donation to help Sister Eileen with postage and handling. Her contact information is as follows:

Eileen Brown
297 Turtle Pointe
Bean Station, TN 37708
Phone: 865-993-4960

Brother Roy Jones has been taking care of the Ayers Chapel Church property. It was suggested to give him \$300 in appreciation for all his work on the church property, then it was motioned, seconded and voted to give him \$400 in appreciation for all the work he has done. There was no charge for the attorney for his help with reviewing the association paperwork, but the clerk will send a letter of thanks to the attorney for his help.

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

For many years, the Saturday service has been dedicated as a memorial service for those saints who have passed from among us. As a special quiet fell over the church, the moderator read the list of names of those that have left our ranks since we last met. These dear saints have gone on to their reward, but they left us with many memories. These memories are precious in our hearts, but we know they are at peace with our Lord.

Having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, Elder Harold Shaw took the lead of the service, singing a song and giving a wonderful testimony. Farther on, still go farther, Jesus will forsake you never, for it is better farther on. He has been with our association for 50 years. Christ liveth within us, everything He did was for us. He read Psalm 23 and used as a thought "The shadow cannot hurt us, for God is with us always." As we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, the shadow will not hurt us, for God is with us. Grieve not the spirit whereby you are sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Lord is with us wherever we go because He said He would never leave us nor forsake us. Surely goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Take time to witness to loved ones now, so you don't have to bury them without them

knowing the Lord. It doesn't appear it will be long before we will be changed in a moment and the twinkling of an eye. We are built upon the right foundation with Jesus as the chief cornerstone.

Elder Terry Sizemore came forward to take the second part of the service with a song and wonderful words of God. When we get home, how sweet it will be to live in peace ever more. When the Lord comes to gather us home, such a time that will be in our glorified body with our Savior leading the way. We need to know we have a personal relationship with our Savior. Regardless of how good our friends and family may have been when teaching us, it is imperative that each of us have a personal knowledge of our Lord and Savior. God has not changed and will continue to be the same forevermore. How wonderful, glorious, marvelous it is to know that God chose us as His children. Always have the understanding and know that we can't do it without Him. Man may let us down, not intentionally, but God will never forsake us, for He is our supreme sacrifice. Always remember they did not take His life, but He willingly gave it for us.

These men preached the Gospel as they were used of God. We thank God for them and for each minister standing for the truth and preaching His word. Thank God for the precious remembrances we have through His wonderful love and mercy.

The Committee on Religious Exercises gave their final report.

Tears of joy filled the eyes of God's people. We have much to rejoice about. Just to know Jesus is worth it all. With songs of praise, we were adjourned.

Sunday Morning, October 7, 2012

I was not able to attend Sunday's services, but it is my understanding that the Lord continued to bless, just as He did throughout the entire setting of the association. Thank God for His marvelous grace.

It is a sad time for the host church when things are packed up and moved to next year's host church. Our prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless Fairview Church and the surrounding community and that many lost souls will come to know the Lord as their personal Savior.

We thank God for this church and all those that were able to visit and make this their home for a few short days. We especially pray for the young lady who accepted the Lord as her Savior and that God will bless her and strengthen her as a young Christian that she may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As a member of next year's host church, I would like to ask everyone to plan ahead with vacation days or whatever means are required to be in attendance at the meeting. I can assure you we are looking forward to it and are already making plans for each of you to be there. We trust God will continue to bless His people during the ensuing year so we can see many souls come to know the Lord.