

MINUTES

OF THE

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

NORTH RIVER UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

CONVENED AT SALEM MEETING HOUSE,

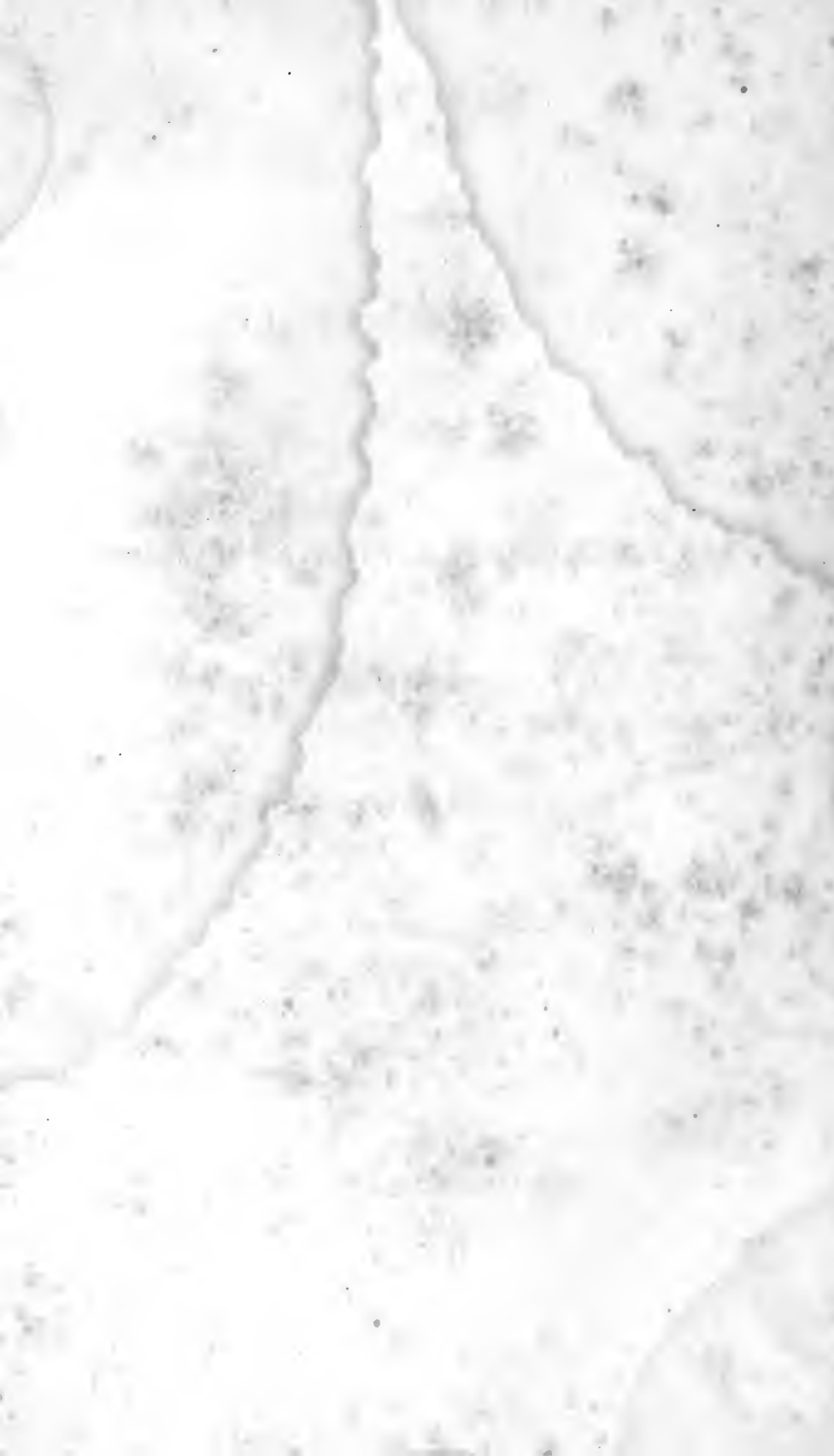
TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, ALABAMA,

ON THE 17TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1841.

Tuscaloosa:

HALE & PHELAN, PRINTERS,

1841.



MINUTES.

1. The introductory sermon was delivered according to previous appointment, by Elder David W. Andrews, from Romans, the 5th chapter, and from verses the 1st to the 5th, inclusive.

2. After a short intermission, the Delegates assembled in the Church, and the Association was opened by prayer by Elder David W. Andrews.

3. Called for and read letters from the several Churches; enrolled the names of the Delegates; and minuted the state of the Churches.

4. Elected Elder David W. Andrews Moderator, and Thomas M. Gabbert Clerk.

5. *Resolved*, That this body take up the business of the Association to-day; which was agreed to.

6. *Resolved*, That the Association be annually held; and that the next Association be held at Shepherd Church, Fayette county, Ala., to commence on Friday before the third Lord's day in September, 1842.

7. *Resolved*, That Elder Joshua Halbert be appointed to preach the next introductory sermon; and Elder Richard Walden his alternate.

8. Received appointments for union meetings—the first in the Second District, to be held at Union Church, to commence Friday before the first Sabbath in September, 1842; and the second, in the Second District, to be held at Pilgrim's Rest Church, to commence Friday before the fourth Sabbath in September, 1842.

9. Appointed a committee, composed of brethren Isaac Cannon, Willis Richards, Abner Files, sen., Isaac Shepherd and John Yerby, to arrange the preaching during this Association.

10. Ordered 200 copies of these minutes to be printed, with the Constitution, Confession of Faith and Rules of Decorum, annexed. And that brethren John Yerby and Absalom Deason be requested to superintend the printing and distribution of the same.

11. *Resolved*, That this Association tender their thanks to the neighborhood of Salem Church, for their hospitality to the Delegates and foreigners.

DAVID W. ANDREWS, Moderator.

THOMAS M. GABBERT, Clerk.

CONSTITUTION.

WE, the United Baptist Churches of Jesus Christ, in Alabama, that believe the doctrine of a free salvation and a general atonement—We all have been baptised upon a profession of our faith in Christ—We are desirous of a reciprocal union—We therefore purpose to maintain the order and rules of an Association, according to the following plan.

We believe that the Churches of Christ are mutually independent of each other; and that the congressional form of church government should be inviolably preserved; yet being convinced of the utility of friendly intercourse and pious counsels, on the principle of reciprocal advantage and christian love, we hold it to be a duty of the Churches to pay respect, on these principles, to the advice of the Association.

Article I. This Association shall be composed of members chosen by the different Churches in our Union, who, on producing letters from their respective Churches certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats. The letters so produced, shall express the condition of their Churches respectively, viz: the number in fellowship; the number received by baptism, by letters, by secession, dismissed, excommunicated, restored, and dead, since the last Association; which letters shall be read and the Delegates names enrolled.

Art. 2. The members thus chosen and convened, shall be known by the name of the North River United Baptist Association.

Art. 3. The Association thus formed, shall choose, by the suffrages of the members present, a Moderator and Clerk, who shall serve one year.

Art. 4. This body shall have no coercive power to lord it over God's heritage, or to infringe on any of the internal privileges or rights of the Churches in our Union; but shall only be considered an advisory council in all matters respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 5. To give Churches the best advice she can in all matters of difficulty; and if the Union should be broken between any of the sister Churches, to inquire into the cause of the breach, and use her best endeavors to remove the difficulty; but if the breach cannot be repaired, to withdraw from any Church or Churches, which they may look upon to be unsound in principle or immoral in practice, until they be reclaimed.

Art. 6. To take up no case of any Church in the Union, without the consent of a majority of the Church, and then only to advise.

Art. 7. Newly constituted or dismissed Churches, may be received into our Union, by their representatives, chosen as before stated; and the Moderator shall signify the same by giving them the right hand of fellowship.

Art. 8. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by such rules as she may adopt. She may adjourn from day to day, until she shall have finished all the business that may be brought before her.

Art. 9. Every Church shall be entitled to a representation of three members.

Art. 10. To have the minutes of the Association read, and altered, if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the Association rises ; and have them printed, if she thinks proper.

Art. 11. The Association shall in all cases be governed by a majority of the members present.

Art. 12. Voting shall be confined exclusively to the body in all acts respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 13. To amend the plan or form of government at any time, when a majority of the Union shall deem it necessary.

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

WE believe the Scriptures, comprising the Old and New Testaments, are the word of God ; and that all Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work ; that they be infallibly true—furnish the only true and unerring standard of faith and practice for individual Churches. We believe that among the abundant truths which they contain, the following are important :

Article 1. We believe that there is one God.

Art. 2. We believe that there are three that bear record in Heaven—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

Art. 3. We believe the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and is called Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Art. 4. We believe that God created man upright, but he abode not in honor, but transgressed the law given him, fell under its penalty, and his posterity has been and still is under its curse ; and by reason of actual transgression, superadded to his fallen nature, is liable to eternal punishment ; and from the dire calamities which sin has subjected him to, he, of himself, has no means by which to extricate himself, and reinstate himself in the image and favor of God.

Art. 5. We believe that Jesus Christ, the son of God, did make an atonement for all men in general ; but the benefits of the atonement specially, are only received by the true believer.

Art. 6. We believe, notwithstanding our fallen and ruined condition, that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life ; that he himself bore our sins in his own body on the cross ; that he was

delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, ascended into Heaven, where, as the Mediator, and High Priest of our profession, he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Art. 7. We believe that in view of all these provisions, richly and abundantly furnished in the Gospel, in which are included his revealed will, and the preaching of the Gospel by men of like passions with ourselves, God commands all men every where to repent and believe the Gospel, promising salvation to such as obey, and threatening damnation to such as believe not, love not, and obey not, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Art. 8. We believe that the Holy Ghost, which is the comforter, has been sent into the world to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and to abide with the children of God as their guide and comforter.

Art. 9. We believe it is the duty of all men every where to repent and believe the Gospel; and of all who do, to be immersed in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and that faith, repentance and baptism are prerequisite to church membership. And all who have complied with the above requisitions, and are orderly members, have a right to commune together when opportunity offers.

Art. 10. We believe it the duty of the disciples of Christ to obey all his commandments, and follow on to know the Lord, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world, ever looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, and give none occasion of offence, neither to Jew nor Gentile, nor to the Church of God. Their privilege is, to persevere in the ways of well doing, through grace to glory, to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, ever bearing in mind, that our Lord hath said, without me ye can do nothing.

Art. 11. We believe that there will be a resurrection both of the just and unjust, and a general judgment after the re-union of soul and body; and judgment in righteousness will exalt and introduce the righteous into life everlasting in Heaven; while it shall sentence the wicked into eternal banishment from God, and consign them to the lake where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

The foregoing declaration is not intended to lord it over God's heritage; but regarding the New Testament as containing the law of the Lord. We would judge of every case, either of doctrine, government or discipline, by that law, and that alone.

RULES OF DECORUM.

RULE 1. The Association shall be opened by prayer.

Rule 2. But one person shall speak at a time, and he shall rise and address the Moderator.

Rule 3. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he departs from the subject in question, or uses words of a personal reflection.

Rule 4. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the Association, except withdrawn by him who made it.

Rule 5. Every case taken up by the Association, shall first be decided or withdrawn before another is offered.

Rule 6. When any question is taken up by the Association, after allowing time for debate, the Moderator shall take the question; and those in favor of the question proposed shall rise on their feet, and those against it shall keep their seats. The decision thus made shall be announced by the Moderator immediately.

Rule 7. No person shall depart from the service of the Association without leave of the Moderator.

Rule 8. No person shall speak more than twice on the same subject, without leave obtained.

Rule 9. The appellation of Brother shall be used in our addresses to one another.

Rule 10. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privileges as any other member, provided he appoints some other member to fill his seat while speaking or otherwise, but shall not vote unless the Association be equally divided.

Rule 11. Any member violating the above rules may be reprov'd as the Association may think proper, only on the same day the offence shall have occurred.