

PROCEEDINGS
Of The
ONE HUNDRED SIXTY SECOND
ANNUAL SESSION
Of The
FISHERS' RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Held With
SANDY RIDGE CHURCH

July 8, 9, 10th
1994

Next session convenes with Pilot Mountain Church located in the town of Pilot Mountain at the junction of N. C. No. 268 with East Main Street (Old Highway No. 52), convening on Friday before the second Sunday in the month of July, 1995 at 11 AM

OFFICERS

Elder Willie Branch.....Moderator
404 Apollo Drive, Mt. Airy, NC 27030
Tel. (910) 789-2603

Carroll F. Gardner.....Clerk
1046 Greenhill Road, Mt. Airy, N. C. 27030
Tel. (919) 789-1765

PROCEEDINGS

Of The One Hundred Sixty Second Annual Session of The Fisher's River Primitive Baptist Association Held With The Church at Sandy Ridge, Carroll County, Lambsburg, Virginia, July 8, 9, and 10, 1994

FRIDAY

Hymns No. 145, *There is a House Not Made with Hands*, No. 4, *Awake My Soul in Joyful Lays*, No. 175, *Amazing Grace*, No. 222, *Sweet Rivers of Redeeming Love*, No. 249, *Love is The Sweetest Bud That Blows*, and No. 218, *You May Sing of the Beauties of Mountain and Dale* were selected and sung by the congregation before the invocation and the Introductory Sermon.

Elder Willie Branch gave the invocation, choosing Hymn No. 38, *Poor, Weak and Worthless Tho I Am*.

Elder Roy Wilson preached the Introductory Sermon, choosing Hymn No. 41, *Jesus My All to Heaven is Gone*. Text: 1 Cor. 6:14-20, "And God Hath Both Raised up the Lord, and Will also Raise us Up in His own Power."

Following the Introductory Sermon intermission was taken for lunch. After intermission the congregation gathered in the church and sang Hymn No. 250, *In Thy Great Name Oh Lord We Come to Worship at Thy Feet*.

The Association began its business session. The Moderator called the Association to order. He yielded to the requests of several and appointed Elders Randall Sanders, Willie Dotson, Charlie Stevens and David Edwards to serve the congregation at the stand.

1. Called for letters from the several churches. All presented letters except Zion Hill. Its status was referred to the Committee on Arrangements.
2. The letters from the churches were read to the Association.
3. The letters were received and the messengers were seated as the Association.
4. The Moderator appointed Elder Garnett Easter to serve as Moderator Pro Tem for the purpose of electing the officers of the Association.
5. The Moderator Pro Tem appointed Elder Larry Blevins, Elder Danny Smith and Elder Victor Church to serve as the Committee to receive the vote of the messengers.

6. The Association agreed to elect its officers by secret ballot.

7. The clerk read the names of the messengers. They came forward and whispered the names of their choice for moderator and clerk. The Committee announced the results of the voting.

Elected:

Moderator.....Elder Willie Branch

Clerk.....Carroll Gardner

The Committee was dissolved. Elder Willie Branch was asked to serve the Association.

Elder Willie Branch thanked the Association for its continued confidence. He asked for the help of everyone. He expressed his love for the Association. Eighteen or nineteen years ago he was elected moderator at Sandy Ridge Church. He promised to do the best he could. He expressed his thanks for all that had taken place since the last Association.

The clerk spoke a word of two thanking the Association messengers for their continued confidence.

8. Called for reports from Correspondents who visited Corresponding Associations.

A. Washington Association. Correspondents reported being seated, finding peace and all reported a good association. Washington Association also adopted the Resolution of the Fisher River Association at its 1993 Session. Peace was achieved between and among the associations, the Sand Lick Association and St. Clair's Bottom Association, at the Session of the Washington Association.

B. Roaring River Association. Correspondents reported being seated, finding peace and all reported a good association.

C. Piney Grove Association. Correspondents reported being seated, finding peace and all reported a good association.

9. The reports of the Correspondents were received by motion, second and affirmative vote. Those who did not attend were excused.

10. Called for Correspondents from Corresponding Associations:

Asking to be received and seated as Correspondents came--

A. From the **Washington Association**: Elders Larry Blevins, Danny Smith, Victor Church, F. O. Sanders; Deacons Perry Compton, Clyde Griffith, Jim Owens; Licentate, Bro. Ked Stacy.

B. From the **Roaring River Association**: Deacon Blaine Dancy, Elder Sam Parrish.

C. From the **Piney Grove Association**: Elders Ray Flinchum, Walter Hodge, John Calhoun; Deacons Carl Burge, S. O. Shelton, Moir Flippin; Brothers Clyde Priddy, Osley Joyce.

11. Called for visitors from Corresponding Associations:

Asking to be received and seated as visitors came--

A. From the **Washington Association**: Sisters Frankie Blevins, Lola Church, Peggy Griffith, Deloris Stacy, Beulah Nunn.

B. From the **Roaring River Association**: Sisters Della Wyatt, Zanetta McGlamery, Olevene Dancy.

C. From the **Piney Grove Association**: Sisters Addie Shelton, Claudia Flippin, Clara Flippin, Murphy Gunter, Lelia Burge, Olean Joyce, Clara Priddy, Rena Cos, Sadie Gammons, Adelene Shelton, Evelyn Calhoun, Beulah Stevens.

D. From the **Little Yadkin Association**: Elder Vance Jones; Deacon Bill Johnson; Brother Floyd Baker; Sisters Myrtle Baker, Hulda Jones and Mary Johnson.

E. From the **Sand Lick Association**: None present.

F. From **St. Clair's Bottom**: Elder Eddie Lyle, Sister Vergie Lyle.

G. From **Mt. Enon Association (Florida)**: Elder George Hazen, Licentate, Bro. Hal Jordan.

H. From Independent Churches:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| (1) Volunteer Church: | Sister Mary Lou Sisk |
| (2) Sandy Creek: | Elder Gurney Nance |
| (3) Korner's Grove: | Elders Elton Staley, Lacy Gates |
| (4) Big Creek: | Elder Charlie Stevens;
Sister Lillian Branch |
| (5) Clear Springs: | Elder Willie Dotson |
| (6) Healthy Plains: | Elder Randall Sanders |

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| (7) Hogan's Creek: | Brother Carlton Fulk,
Sister Elah Fulk |
| (8) Chestnut Grove: | Elders Alec Edwards,
Samuel Edwards |
| (9) Fulk Memorial: | Elder David Edwards |
| (10) Old Hollow: | Elder Clayton Mosley;
Sister Viter Margie Thomas |
| (11) Cana: | Deacon Harold Hill;
Sister Imogene Hill |

The Moderator asked Correspondents and visitors to come forward and receive the right hand of fellowship. All came forward and were warmly welcomed.

12. The Association asked the Moderator to make all temporary committee appointments.

Appointed to--

A. The **Committee on Arrangements:** Elder J. H. Keaton, Elder Roy Wilson and Deacon Carlis Brown to serve with the Moderator and Clerk.

B. The **Committee on Preaching:** Deacon Raymond Goins and Deacon Troy Jones to serve with the messengers of Sandy Ridge Church.

C. The **Finance Committee:** Deacon Graham Mosley, Brother Johnnie Ray Childress and Deacon Willie Jones.

13. The Committee on Arrangements agreed to meet in the church after services at the stand are completed for the day.

14. A motion was made, seconded and approved that the Minute of the Day be read. It was read and approved by a show of hands.

Saturday--

The congregation gathered in the church and sang Hymn No. 261, When I Can Read My Title Clear. Hymn No. 154, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, was sung.

15. The Moderator announced that the Preaching Committee had selected Elders Vance Jones, George Hazen, John Calhoun and Danny Smith to serve the congregation at the stand.

16. Elder Dillard Gibbons was asked to open the association work with song and prayer. He selected Hymn No. 59, Oh For A Closer Walk With God, which was sung before the invocation.

17. Called the roll of the churches. All messengers or alternates were present.

18. Called for correspondents not present on Friday.

Asking to be received and seated as correspondents came--

A. From the **Washington Association**: Elders Ben Blevins and George Ben Combs; Deacons Don Blevins and Clyde Fletcher.

B. From the **Roaring River Association**: Brother John Caudill; Brothers Paul Felts and Roy Choate.

C. From the **Piney Grove Association**: Deacon Elyard Owens; Brother Ray Young.

19. Called for visitors not present Friday.

Asking to be received and seated as visitors came--

A. From the Washington Association: Sisters Wanda Powers, Julie Powers and Violet Blevins.

B. From the Roaring River Association: Sisters Mary Vannoy, Vina Sue Murray, Debby Blevins, Ann Pruitt and Zury Felts.

C. From the Piney Grove Association: Sisters Rachel Owens, Louise Dunlap, Lucille Coram, Joyce Young, Betty Martin, Opal Bowman; Brothers Hardin Bowman, Junior Martin.

D. From the Little Yadkin Association: Sister Margie Todd.

E. From the Sand Lick Association: Elder Gerald Yates; Sister Ellen Yates.

F. From the St. Clair's Bottom Association: Elders Leonard Barton, Billy Cook; Deacon Blaine Owens; Brother Kenneth Presnell; Sisters Maggie Barton, Bonnie Cook.

G. From the Mt. Enon Association: None.

H. From any other Association:

- (1) **Mountain:** None
- (2) **Sender:** None
- (3) **Mt. Zion:** Elder David Bailey

I. From the **Independent Churches:**

- (1) **Fairview:** Sister Pearlie Hawks
- (2) **Stoney Creek:** Elder Elbert Hunter
- (3) **Volunteer:** Deacon Swanson Joyce, Sister Ruby Joyce
- (4) **Big Creek:** Sister Lucy Beasley
- (5) **Boyles Chapel:** Deacon Roy Collins

Correspondents and visitors were asked to come forward and receive the right hand of fellowship. They were joyfully welcomed.

20. The Finance Committee was asked to commence its work.

21. Called for the Report of the Committee on Arrangements.

The Report

We recommend:

- A. That the Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, the Constitution and the Covenant be printed in the Minute.
- B. That the church at Pilot Mountain host the next session of the Association.
- C. That the Moderator receive an honorarium of \$50.00.
- D. That the association adopt a Resolution of Thanks to God for his abundant blessings and that the association express its thanks to the brothers and sisters and kind friends for taking care of the association.
- E. That the clerk have 600 copies of the Minute printed and distributed.
- F. That the Finance Committee use up to \$300 of the contributions for the benefit of the visiting elders.
- G. That the Circular Letter prepared by Elder Glenn Cox be printed in the Minute.
- H. That Elder Willie Branch write the next Circular Letter.
- I. That the obituaries presented to the clerk be printed in the Minute.
- J. That the association continue watchcare for Zion Hill Church. We ask that the churches of the association extend the services of deacons and arrange for meetings to be held at Zion Hill.
- K. We recommend that copies of the Request to the churches, the Resolutions adopted by the churches and the Moderator's Report of the October 31, 1993 meeting be printed in the Association Minute with the notation that the Report was mailed and delivered to each of the churches and made a part of their minutes.

(i) **The Request.**

"September 15, 1993

TO THE SEVERAL CHURCHES OF THE FISHER'S RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION:

We, the undersigned, respectfully urge and request that each and all of our churches adopt the RESOLUTION enclosed (original and copy) at their next conference meetings with the view and hope that all of the churches will have adopted this Resolution with the copy forwarded to the moderator of the Association before the scheduled October 31, 1993 meeting of the elders and deacons and other concerned brothers and sisters coming from other associations and independent churches.

If this Resolution is adopted now and in advance of the October 31 meeting, our churches can immediately welcome visiting elders and other Old Baptists to their churches without having to wait until our next association session in July, 1994.

Keep the original with your minutes. Sign both. Forward the copy to Elder Willie Branch, 404 Apollo Drive, Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030.

Let brotherly love continue.

Sincerely,

S/ Elder J. H. Keaton

S/ Elder Roy Wilson

S/ Deacon Troy Jones

S/ Elder Willie Branch

S/ Deacon Ellis Jones

S/ Brother Carroll F. Gardner"

(ii) **The Resolution.**

"Whereas the Fisher's River Primitive Baptist Association at its 1993 Session encouraged the elders, deacons and concerned brothers and sisters to invite our separated brethren of other Primitive Baptist Associations and independent Primitive Baptist Churches to meet and to explore the possibility of resuming correspondence and fellowship we formerly enjoyed;

And Whereas our corresponding association, the Washington District Regular Primitive Baptist Association, has already succeeded in the elimination of all barriers to fellowship with the Sand Lick Primitive Baptist Association and with a host of other independent Primitive Baptist Churches with whom the Sand Lick Association has fellowship and correspondence;

And Whereas a favorable climate of goodwill and fellowship is acknowledged already to exist with the Little Yadkin Primitive Baptist Association composed of churches formerly a part of our own union and association and with a number of independent Primitive Baptist Churches known to adhere to sound doctrine and practices;

Now, to hasten the resumption of fellowship and correspon-

In obedience to the command of the Association to explore the possibility of securing broader correspondence with associations and churches with whom we formerly enjoyed fellowship and communion, an invitation was extended to the several associations and independent churches who are known and acknowledged to adhere to sound doctrine and practice in accordance with the King James version of the Holy Bible. The several deacons, elders and interested brothers and sisters of our own association met at Little Vine Primitive Baptist Church on the 5th Saturday in October, 1993, at 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

Present, in addition to our own brethren, were elders and deacons from our corresponding associations, Washington, Roaring River and Piney Grove, representatives from the Sand Lick Primitive Baptist Association, a host of independent churches in fellowship with the Sand Lick Association, and elders and deacons from Little Yadkin Primitive Baptist Association and from St. Clair's Bottom Association.

Elders Vance Jones, David Edwards and Robert Lawson represented the Little Yadkin Association.

Elders Franklin Vires, Josh Vires, Price Vires, Ostel Smith, Garnell Gilbert, Bob Arrington, Gerald Yates and Don Stacey represented the Sand Lick Association.

Elders Hugh Blevins, Eddie Lyle, Billy Cook and Leonard Barton represented the St. Clair's Bottom Association.

Independent churches enjoying fellowship with Little Yadkin and Sand Lick Associations were represented by the following elders:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| (a) Boyles Chapel | Elder Jimmy Lankford |
| (b) Chestnut Grove | Elders Raymond Sumner,
Lester Faulkner, Samuel Edwards,
and Woody Edwards |
| (c) Fulk Memorial | Elder David A. Edwards |
| (d) Korner's Grove | Elders Lacy Gates, Johnny Belton
and William Staley |
| (e) Wilson | Elder Millard Shelton |

Three other independent churches were represented by the following elders:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| (a) Sandy Creek | Elder Gurney Nance |
| (b) Fellowship | Elder Randall Saunders |
| (c) Pearson's Chapel | Elder Don Hazen |

The four independent churches recognized heretofore and with whom we now enjoy fellowship, Clear Springs, Big Creek, Fairview, and Flat Shoals, were also represented.

Other elders and observers were present.

The Resolutions adopted by the several churches of the Fisher's River Primitive Baptist Association in the months of September and October, 1993, were read.

Comment from those in attendance was invited. Several elders did comment, all favorably.

Elder Larry Blevins of the Washington Association reported reconciliation with the Sand Lick Association, accomplished by Resolutions adopted by both the Washington and Sand Lick Associations at their most recent sessions.

The invitation to broader correspondence and fellowship specifically excluded primitive baptists who still hold to absolute predestination and the nonresurrection of the body.

Elders from independent churches spoke in favor of resumption of fellowship.

The business session lasted two hours. A preaching service followed. Elder Eddie Lyle opened the service. Elder Billy Cook, Elder Garnell Gilbert and Elder Franklin Vires all preached, powerfully and uplifting. Elder J. H. Keaton and Elder Josh Vires closed the service.

At 4:30 P.M. the session adjourned. An evening meal prepared by the sisters of the association was served at the Salem Fork Home Extension Building nearby.

The timely adoption of Resolutions by the churches of the Fisher's River Association made it possible for immediate correspondence and fellowship with our beloved brethren who, as we, embrace the principle of salvation by grace.

Several of the elders preached at our Union meeting held with Union Church Saturday night and Sunday following.

We now enjoy at long last the cherished fellowship we, as they, should have heretofore enjoyed, made possible by divine guidance and the prayers of many.

Elder Willie Branch
Moderator, Fisher's River Association

22. By motion, second and a show of hands the Report of the Committee on Arrangements was received.

The Moderator explained that the churches were asked to adopt Resolutions in September and October in advance of the 5th Saturday in October meeting to which a host of associations and churches were invited.

23. The Moderator asked that obituaries be delivered to the clerk in advance of printing of the Minute.

24. Called for volunteers to visit corresponding associations.

Volunteering to go--

A. To the **Washington Association**: Elders J. H. Keaton, Willie Branch, Glenn Cox; Deacons Troy Jones, Carlis Brown, W. R. Coins and Willie Jones; Brother Carroll Gardner.

B. To the **Roaring River Association**: Elders J. H. Keaton, Glenn Cox, Willie Branch; Deacons Troy Jones, Ellis Jones, Willie Jones, Carlis Brown; Brother Carroll Gardner.

C. To the **Piney Grove Association**: Elders J. H. Keaton, Willie Branch; Deacons Carlis Brown, Ellis Jones, Troy Jones, Willie Jones; Brother Carroll Gardner.

25. By motion, second and show of hands, the Association vote to initiate direct correspondence with Little Yadkin, Sand Lick and St. Clair's Bottom Associations.

Volunteering to go--

A. To **Little Yadkin Association**: Elders J. H. Keaton, Glenn Cox, Willie Branch; Deacons W. R. Coins, Carlis Brown, Willie Jones, Troy Jones, Ellis Jones. (4th week end in September)

B. To the **Sand Lick Association**: Elder Roy Wilson, Elder Glenn Cox, Elder Willie Branch. (2nd week end in September)

C. To the **St. Clair's Bottom Association**: Elders Glenn Cox, Roy Wilson, J. H. Keaton, Willie Branch. (3rd week end in September)

26. The Association voted to correspond by Minute with the following associations:

- (1) **Mates Creek**;
- (2) **Mt. Zion**;
- (3) **Senter**;
- (4) **Mountain**
- (5) **New Liberty**;
- (6) **Burning Springs**

27. The Finance Committee reported contributions of \$885.00.

The Moderator secured authorization to ask for additional contributions from those attending the association. The clerk is to report the amount received in this manner.

28. A motion was made, seconded and approved to receive the report of the Finance Committee and to discharge the Committee on Arrangements, to discharge the Preaching Committee and the Finance Committee upon the completion of their work.

29. A motion was approved to read the Minute of the Day. It was read and accepted by voice vote.

ELDERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Elder Willie Branch	404 Apollo Dr., Mt. Airy NC 27030	(910) 789-2603
Elder J. A. Marion	Rt. 1, Ararat, NC 27053	" 274-2326
Elder Roy Wilson	Rt. 2, Mt. Airy, NC 27030	" 351-3995
Elder Garnett Easter	Rt. 1, Box 362, Cana, VA 24317	(703) 755-4744
Elder J. H. Keaton	Rt. 1, Westfield, NC 27053	(910) 351-2431
Elder Kenneth Hawks	Winston-Salem, NC	" 767-6601
Elder Paul Shelton	Greensboro, NC	" 273-5724
Elder Dillard Gibbons	1505 Pecan Dr., High Point, NC	" 431-2548
Elder Leon Young	Rt. 1, Box 243, Westfield, NC 27053	" 593-8844
Elder Glenn Cox	Rt. 4, King, NC 27053	" 983-4489
Elder Warren Smith	Pilot Mountain, NC 27041	" 368-2090

DISTRIBUTION OF MINUTES

CHURCH	CLERK	ADDRESS	MINUTES
Sandy Ridge	Fannie McMillian	Rt. 2, Box 366 Cana, VA 24317	40
Pilot Mountain	Roy Wilson	4835 Westfield Rd. Mt. Airy, NC 27030	40
Mitchell River	Elizabeth Southard	Rt. 1, Box 525 Dobson, NC 27017	20
Union	Carroll Gardner	1046 Greenhill Rd. Mt. Airy, NC 27030	45
Little Vine	Johnnie Childress	Rt. 3, Box 318 Elkin, NC 28621	70
Rock House	Raymond Coins	Westfield, NC 27030	45
Zion Hill	Vestal Jones	Rt. 2 Cana, VA 24317	20
Roaring River	Blaine Dancy	Rt. 3, Box 582 Marion, VA 24354	25
Washington	Danny Smith	Rt. 3 Grundy, VA	50
Piney Grove	S. O. Shelton	Westfield, NC 27053	
Cedar Falls	Marie Fulp	Rt. 1, Box 244 Westfield, NC 27053	50 40
St. Clair Bottom	Blaine Owens	103 Jefferson Drive Bristol, VA 24201	20
Sandlick	Johnny Viers	Rt. 2, Box 270B Haysi, VA 24256	20
Mountain	Roy L. Truitt	102 Gentry St. Galax, VA 24333	20
Mt. Zion	Finley Ratliff	Rt. 1, Box 111A Union, WV 24983	20
Mates Creek	Randal Thornsburg	H. C. 64, Box 125 Huddy, KY 41535	20
Mt. Enon	Bob Kilpatric	1617 Stephanie Lane Lakeland, FL 33818	20
Burning Springs	Emerson Montgomery	1139 Pleasant Hill Rd. Waverly, OH 45690	20
A. B. Hall		Rt. 3, Box 112 Arab, AL 35016	1
The Primitive Baptist Library		416 Main St. Carthage, NC 62321	2
Carroll Gardner		1046 Greenhill Rd. Mt. Airy, NC 27070	13

CIRCULAR LETTER

Dear Brethren:

I have been appointed to write the circular letter, and I make my effort.

The Fisher River Association was organized on Friday before the third Sunday in November, 1832, at Old Cody's Creek Meeting House. There the Articles of Faith were drafted. By the grace of God, the Association continues.

I thank God for hearing the prayers of the saints and causing our churches to come together and sit down with one another and worship together. I believe peace reigns once again in Zion.

The Lord said: "**My peace I give unto thee. My peace I leave with thee.**" I believe it is up to us to keep that peace if only we would look over one another for good and not for evil. We all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. When sin is finished, it brings forth death.

The Lord said: "**I will plant my laws in your heart; in your mind will I write them.**" If we will go by that law, we will not go far wrong. Forgiving one another we will see the little lambs coming home telling the old mother church what the Lord has done for them, taking up their cross and following Him.

The Lord called the servants to preach the glorious gospel to the saints below. If one of God's little ones asked for a cold drink of water, give it to him and you give it unto the Lord. So be good to one another and work for peace.

Your brother in hope,

S/ Elder Glenn Cox

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Articles I - Of God and the Holy Trinity.

We believe in one only true and living God, who rules all things after his own will; and that he who created all things, is infinite in power, wisdom, knowledge and goodness; eternal, immortal, invisible, and unchangeable; and that this God has revealed himself in his word under the character of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that these three bear witness in earth; the water, the spirit and the blood, and that these three agree in one.

Article II - Of the Holy Scriptures.

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written word of God, and are a sufficient rule of faith and practice; that they are given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; and that they contain all things necessary to be known for the salvation of men and women.

Article III - Of the Atonement.

We believe that Christ died and made a complete atonement for all who ever did, does now, or ever will believe on His name; and that all who are finally saved were given to Christ in covenant of the Father before the world was, that they should show forth his praise.

Article IV - Of Foreknowledge, Election, and Predestination

We believe that (all) whom God did foreknow he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son; that God elected according to his foreknowledge, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, all who are finally saved, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that none come to Christ only those whom he loved with an everlasting love, and due time calls to everlasting glory.

Article VI - We believe in man's impotency to recover himself from the fallen state he is in by his own free will and ability.

Article VII - We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed righteousness of Christ..

VIII - We believe that God's elect will be called, converted, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Article IX - We believe that saints preserve in grace and never finally fall away.

Article X - We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the only proper subjects of ordinances, and that the true mode of baptism is by immersion.

Article XI - We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general judgement.

Article XII - We believe in the punishment of the wicked will be eternal, and the joys of the righteous everlasting.

Article XIII - We believe that no minister has the right to administer the ordinances only such as regularly called and have come under the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.

CONSTITUTION

1. The Association shall be composed of members chosen by different churches in our union, and sent to represent them in the Association, who shall be members best qualified for that purpose; and producing letters from their respective churches, certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats; but no church shall have more than three representatives in the Association. When a representative or messenger and an alternate representative or alternate messenger shall, for good cause, be absent, the two messengers present at the Association shall be empowered to fill the vacancy by designating a brother or sister present at the Association for the church affected to serve for the absent representative or messenger and the brother or sister designated shall have the same authority to vote on all matters of business conducted by the Association as if selected originally as a messenger by the church.
2. In the letters from the different churches shall be expressed their number in full fellowship, those baptised, received by letter, dismissed by letter, excommunicated and dead since the last Association.
3. The members thus chosen and received shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall they use any ecclesiastical power over the churches, nor shall infringe on any of the churches in the union.
4. The Association, when convened, shall be governed and ruled by a regular and proper decorum.
5. The Association shall have a moderator and clerk, and who shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.
6. New churches may be admitted into this Association, who shall petition by letter and messengers; and upon examination, if found orthodox and orderly, shall be received by the Association, and manifested by the moderator giving the messengers the right hand of fellowship.
7. Every church in the union shall be entitled to representation in the Association.
8. Every query presented by any member in the Association, shall be received and answered according to the Scriptures.
9. Every motion made and seconded shall be considered by the Association, except it be withdrawn by him who made it.
10. There shall be an Association book kept, wherein the proceedings of the Association shall be recorded, by the clerk appointed by the Association.
11. The Minutes of the Association shall be read and corrected, if need be, and signed by the moderator and clerk before the Association rises.
12. Amendments to this plan or form a government may be made at

any time when the Association may think proper.

13. We hold no fellowship with any secret order.

14. The Association shall power: (1) To provide for the general union of the churches; (2) To preserve inviolable a chain of communion among the churches; (3) To give the churches all necessary advice in matters of difficulty; (4) To inquire into the cause why the churches fail at any time to represent themselves in the Association; (5) To appoint any member or members, by and his/their consent, to transact business which it sees necessary; (6) To withdraw from any church in this union which shall violate the rules of this Association, or deviate for the orthodox principles of religion; (7) To admit any of our distant brethren into the Association, as assistants, who may be present at the time of its sitting. If it shall think necessary; (8) To adjourn themselves to any future time and convenient to the churches in this union.

COVENANT

We do now in the presence of Almighty God, and in the faith of the gospel, and by the help of divine grace, unreservedly and unitedly give up ourselves to God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Ghost, to be for Him and no other, freely submitting ourselves to him to be at disposal for his glory, taking him as our true guide and only portion, promising by the help of divine grace to watch against sin, temptation, and corruption; and to hold a continual warfare with the same, looking to Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith, and the only hope and surety of his people. Under his covenant of grace, we do now freely and joyfully give ourselves to one another by the will God, freely covenanting and engaging to and with each other to bear one another's burdens in the gospel, so fulfill the law of Christ unto obedience, promising to watch other one another in love and to hold communion together in the ordinances of the gospel, submitting ourselves in this, which we trust is a part of his mystical body, according as we shall be directed by his Spirit in his word; and by the help of divine grace to still pray for more light from the Lord, believing that he will further and more gloriously open to us his word and the mysteries of his kingdom, - and to our Lord Jesus Christ, and our only Savior, to whom be glory forever and forever. Amen.

RULES OF DECORUM

1. The Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.
2. The moderator and clerk shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.
3. Only one person shall speak at a time, who shall arise from his seat and address the moderator.
4. The person thus speaking shall not be interrupted in his speech by any, except the moderator, till he is done speaking.
5. He shall strictly adhere to the subject, and in no wise reflect on the person who spoke before, so as to make remarks on his slips, failings, or imperfections; but shall fairly state the case and matter, as nearly as he can, so as to convey his ideas.
6. No person shall abruptly break off, or absent himself from the Association, without leave obtained from the Association.
7. No person shall rise and speak more than three times on one subject, without liberty obtained from the Association.
8. No member of the Association shall have the liberty of laughing during the sitting of the same, nor whispering in time of a public speech.
9. No member of the Association shall address another in any other appellation than that of brother.
10. The moderator shall not interrupt any member in his speech nor prohibit him from speaking till he gives his light on the subject, except he breaks the rules of this decorum.
11. The names of the several members of the Association shall be enrolled by the clerk, and called over as often as the Association thinks proper.
12. The moderator shall be entitled to the same privileges of speech as other members, provided the chair be filled.
13. Any member who shall willfully and knowingly break any of these rules shall be reprovved by the Association as it may think proper.

INVITATION

To: Primitive Baptists, Churches and Associations, who are regarded or who deem themselves orthodox in doctrine and practice guided by the standard prescribed by The King James Version of the Bible.

From: The Fisher's River Primitive Baptist Association pursuant to a call requested and authorized by the several churches of the Association at its 1993 session held with Rock House Church in July.

An invitation is extended to the elders, deacons and servants of Primitive Baptist Churches and Associations with whom we have in the past enjoyed communion, correspondence or fellowship and to as many as earnestly desire to broaden their ties, contacts, correspondence and fellowship who embrace the King James Version of the Bible as their only sure and reliable guide in matters of doctrine and practice.

The fifth Saturday in October, 1993, is chosen as the nearest and most convenient date for an assembly at Little Vine Church just west of Dobson on Kapps Mill Road (deemed large enough to accommodate all who may wish to attend) and the time selected is 1 o'clock P.M.

When assembled, after calling the meeting to order, the body should choose a moderator for the purpose of guiding discussion.

Those with whom I have had an opportunity to discuss the format or the agenda have suggested this meeting should not be a religious service, suggesting instead a purely business meeting. I trust this meets with your approval.

Certain misgivings ought be addressed and a general understanding of the purposes and objectives ought in a general way be considered.

First, it would seem advisable that we should avoid altogether any discussion of what may have been the causes for our separation or which have served as impediments or barriers to resumption or commencement of fellowship.

Second, should a strong concensus or general agreement develop to open doors or eliminate barriers to fellowship no conditions ought first be required of any church or association. Whoever may have been baptised by ordained authority by complete immersion ought to have and enjoy his own personal and individual satisfaction with that baptism, remaining with the church where his membership is lodged. In a spirit of goodwill and utter and complete forgiveness individual members who perceive they have had past grievances unresolved, all such individuals ought be encouraged to abandon or release the same for the greater good of broadened opportunity for the gospel (and the preaching of the gospel) to flourish.

Third, existing alliances, relationships or correspondence ought not be altered except to the extent deemed advisable and worthwhile

to achieve greater or fuller correspondence and fellowship.

Fourth, the autonomy and the integrity of the church ought to be respected. Churches, while free to form or join associations of churches, are also free to remain independent. There is no higher authority than the church itself.

Fifth, the role of an (the) association should be examined in its historical context, as worthwhile and beneficial insofar as they (a) provided for the general union of the churches; (b) preserved a chain of communion among the churches; (c) afforded advice to the churches in all matters of difficulty (when requested); and (d) withdrawing from a church deviating from orthodox principles of religion.

Historically, and viewed in a positive manner, associations labored patiently and long with the brethren (and with churches) with a purpose of a gentle persuasion to reconciliation; viewed in a more negative manner, associations have at times abruptly severed ties deferring to mood and to impulse rather than to the patience and compassion which should have guided our deliberations. Though ever so sincere, individuals can be wrong or misguided. When several or many individuals, similarly sincere and equally misguided or misled by mood and impulse, acting as an association (messengers from churches) long cherished and valued ties and relationships have been harmed. We have all sinned and fallen short. And too many have suffered needlessly. As the prophet said, "Come, let us reason together." We have too often misplaced our priorities.

Sixth, it may be worthwhile to establish or reestablish our priorities. Among priorities to consider ought we to emphasize (a) the need simply to work untiringly toward creating an atmosphere where any God called ordained and God qualified elder be afforded an opportunity in any church wanting him to do so to be able to preach the unsearchable riches of the gospel, and (b) allow the individual church the freedom it should in any case assert to preach any elder who conscientiously subscribes to the orthodox doctrine and practice in accordance with the King James Version of the Bible?

Ought we to encourage the churches to require that an elder certify that he is in good standing at his home church? That, and nothing more.

Ought we to encourage the churches to exercise their own vigilance with respect to fundamentally sound doctrine and practice, choosing to disallow an elder or elders to preach for the right reasons (or, conceivably, for the wrong reasons) should the church have misgivings about his advocacy or his conduct. Certain matters must be left in the sound discretion of the church as a body of believers.

As many as receive this invitation, if pleased by prospect of resumption of fellowship, feel free to invite others who may not be known to us with whom you enjoy correspondence and fellowship to come also. Your presence and your views and opinions are welcomed and needed.

Sincerely,

Elder Willie Branch
Moderator, Fisher's River Association
404 Apollo Drive
Mt. Airy, NC 27030
Telephone: (919) 789-2603

STATISTICAL REPORT

CHURCHES	MESSENGERS	No. Communion	Sun. Meeting	Experience	Restored	Excluded	Decased	Relationship	Total Membership	Contributions
PILOT MOUNTAIN	Elder Glenn Cox, Sister Nancy Wilson, Sister Ethel Hawks Elder Roy Wilson, Alt.	8	1						7	\$65
CEDAR FALLS	Deacon Willie Jones, Deacon Carlis Brown, Elder Leon Young Sister Marie Fulp, Alt.	5	4						10	\$175
MITCHELL RIVER	Elder Dillard Gibbons, Sister Elizabeth Southard, Sister Joyce Gibbons; Sister Evelyn Stewart, Alt.	7	4						9	\$70
UNION	Deacon Graham Mosley, Elder Warren Smith, Sister Gladys Harvey; Sister Kay Mosley, Alt.	7	4	1					33	\$110
LITTLE VINE	Deacon George White, Deacon Troy Jones, Brother Ray Childress Brother Joey Jenkins, Alt.	8	2	5	1		3		40	\$190
ROCK HOUSE	Deacon Ellis Jones, Deacon W.R. Coins, Elder J. H. Keaton Brother Elmer Hooker	9	2	2	1		1		25	\$175
ZION HILL	(Did not appoint messengers)	7	3						4	\$30
SANDY RIDGE	Elder Garnett Easter, Deacon Yancy Hawks, Sister Franie McMillian; Sister Ethel Hawks, Alt.	8	3				2		40	\$70
				8	2		6		168	\$885

Note: No statistical data reflected with respect to "Letter" or "Dismissed by Letter." No data submitted.