

MINUTES
OF
THE FIRST SESSION
OF
THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION,
HELD IN BARDSTOWN,
On the 29th, 30th and 31st days of March, 1832.

At 11 o'clock, on Thursday, an appropriate Introductory Discourse, from 2nd Kings, 5th chapter, and latter clause of the 26th verse, was delivered by the Rev. Ryland T. Dillard—At 3 o'clock P. M. many Ministers and other brethren, representing Churches and primary Associations in various sections of the State, met in Council.

Rev. GEORGE BLACKBURN was called to the chair, and SPENCER CLACK and HENRY WINGATE were appointed Secretaries.

The following brethren then reported themselves as delegates from their respective Churches and Associations, to-wit :

Frankfort Association—Silas M. Noel, George Blackburn, James Shannon, Henry Wingate, George Woods, and George Ramsay.

Little Union Church—Spencer county—Aaron Bridges.

United Baptist Church—Green River—Albert G. Maxey.

New Church—Louisville—James B. Smith.

Georgetown Association—J. Smith Bacon, U. B. Chambers, George W. Eaton, William F. Nelson, and Philip J. Burress.

Coxe's Creek—Nelson county—Isaac Taylor, Joshua Hobbs, and Abner King.

Lexington Association—R. T. Dillard, Francis Sieg, and Herbert C. Thomson.

Salem Church—Bardstown—Samuel Carpenter, A. Graham, George Penny, and Henry Gore.

Zoar Church—James E. Duval, and J. S. Eaton.

The Baptist Church of Jesus Christ—Louisville—Silas T. Toncray, Thomas Parent, and John Delph.

Mill Creek—Nelson county—Thomas Linthicum, and Thomas Lewis.

Bloomfield Church—Spencer Clack, James Porter, and William Davis.

Resolved, unanimously, That all Baptist Ministers in good standing who may attend this session, be invited to seats in the Convention—whereupon, brethren George Waller, David Thurman, Locke, Morris, Brown, &c. entered and took their seats.

Brother Chambers moved the following resolution, which was read and adopted :

Resolved, That this meeting consider it expedient now to take the necessary steps for forming themselves into a State Convention.

Brother Dillard moved the following resolution, which was read and adopted :

Resolved, That no member of this body shall be allowed to speak more than twice to any one question, without leave from the Moderator.

The following brethren were appointed a committee to draft a Constitution for the government of this Convention, to-wit :

S. M. Noel, A. Bridges, A. G. Maxey, J. B. Smith, Isaac Taylor, J. Smith Bacon, R. T. Dillard, A. Graham, J. E. Duvall, S. T. Toncray, S. Clack, T. Linthicum, and P. C. Slaughter.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning, 8 o'clock, and closed with prayer by brother George W. Eaton.

FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 30th, 1832.

The Convention assembled and was opened with prayer by Brother Locke.

The Committee appointed for that purpose, reported a Constitution, which was read, amended, and adopted, as follows, viz :

Constitution of the Kentucky Baptist State Convention.

ART. I. This Convention shall be known by the name of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

2nd. It shall be composed of those, and those only, who belong to, or are in correspondence with, the general Union of Baptists in Kentucky.

3rd. Any Church, Auxiliary Society, or Association, belonging to the Baptist connexion, shall be entitled to three representatives, qualified as in article second.

4th. The representatives of the Churches, Societies, and Associations, when assembled in Convention, shall have no ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Churches or Associations, nor act even as an advisory council in cases of difficulty between Churches; nor shall they interfere with the Constitution of any Church or Association, nor with the articles of general union.

5th. The Convention, when met, shall elect a Moderator, three Corresponding Secretaries, Clerk, Treasurer, and as many other members as the Convention may, from time to time, think necessary; who, together with said officers, shall be an executive board; a majority may constitute a quorum for business. During the recess of the Convention, its business shall be transacted by the executive committee, who shall have power to fill vacancies in their own body, and shall submit a report of their proceedings to each annual meeting.

6th. The Convention shall, annually, collect and publish a statistical account of the Churches and Associations in this state—devise and execute plans for supplying destitute churches and neighborhoods with the gospel of Christ, and have power to disburse monies contributed by the Churches and Associations in the manner specified by the contributors, provided special instructions are sent.

7th. All monies contributed by the Churches, Associations, and others, to aid travelling preachers, and to advance the benevolent views and objects of the Convention generally, shall be specifically appropriated to those purposes.

8th. The Convention shall send forth men of tried integrity and usefulness to preach the gospel.

9th. The Convention shall meet on the last Saturday in May, alternately on the North and South sides of the Kentucky river.

10th. This Constitution may be amended at any stated meeting of the Convention, two thirds of the members present concurring therein.

The following brethren were then duly elected officers of the Convention, viz :

SILAS M. NOEL, *Moderator.*

GEORGE W. EATON, *Corresponding Secretary.*

SAMUEL CARPENTER, and HERBERT C. THOMSON, *Corresponding Secretaries.*

HENRY WINGATE, *Clerk.*

JAMES SHANNON, *Treasurer.*

George Waller, David Thurman, Spencer Clack, R. T. Dillard, John Bryce, and George Blackburn, members of the Executive Committee.

Brother John Bryce, a member of the Convention from Georgetown Association, entered and took his seat.

Brethren Clack, Chambers and Thomson, were appointed a committee to prepare an address to the Baptists in Kentucky, setting forth the objects and designs of this Convention, and make report to-morrow.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning, 8 o'clock, and closed with prayer by brother Bryce.

SATURDAY MORNING, 31st MARCH, 1832.

The Convention assembled, and was opened with prayer by brother Nelson.

The following sums were contributed in aid of the Convention, viz:

Frankfort Association,	-	-	-	-	\$50 00
Lexington do.	-	-	-	-	36 00
Bloomfield Church,	-	-	-	-	10 00
Little Union do.	-	-	-	-	4 00
Coxe's Creek do.	-	-	-	-	24 43 $\frac{1}{4}$
New Baptist Church, Louiville,	-	-	-	-	10 00
United do. do. Green river,	-	-	-	-	5 00
Mill Creek do. Nelson county,	-	-	-	-	8 00
Salem do. Bardstown,	-	-	-	-	15 00
Zoar do.	-	-	-	-	5 00
Dorcas Society of Females, Georgetown,	-	-	-	-	10 00
Georgetown Association,	-	-	-	-	13 25
					<hr/> \$190 68 $\frac{3}{4}$

Brother Bryce moved the following preamble and resolution, which was read and adopted, viz:

WHEREAS, This Convention is mainly composed, at present, of delegates from the Licking, Elkhorn, Franklin, Long-run, Salem, and Green river Associations, all holding substantially the same doctrines; and, whereas, some of our brethren have entertained fears that this Convention intended to make some innovation in the order of the Baptist Churches; in which they are entirely mistaken: Therefore,

Resolved, That we will severally maintain the doctrine and order uninfringed of the Churches composing the above Associations, as at present established.

Brother Clack, from the committee appointed for that purpose, reported the following address, which was read and adopted:

TO THE BAPTISTS OF KENTUCKY.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD: Having assembled in Bardstown, Ky., agreeably to an invitation given in the public papers, for the purpose of forming a State Convention, we present for your examination the result of our consultations. Since our arrival in this place, we learn that, but for the short notice given, there would have been a much more numerous meeting of the brethren.

A few of our brethren have suspected that the movers of this meeting were actuated by some other than the avowed object,

and desire to usurp ecclesiastical authority over the Churches. Such fears are wholly groundless. In addition to our solemn and unequivocal denial of any such design, we invite your attention to the Constitution of this Convention. From it you will learn, that the Convention *can* possess *no* ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Churches and Associations; that it *cannot* and *will not*, in any way, interfere with the Constitutions of Churches and Associations; but that our object is, as far as practicable, to cultivate further acquaintance; to diffuse, more extensively amongst our brethren throughout the State, the spirit of kindness and brotherly love, and to bring into more active co-operation the disciples of our common Lord, in advancing his holy cause.

Our Saviour, just before his ascension, commanded his disciples to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This command of the Lord Jesus is, now, either binding on the disciples of Christ, or it is not. If binding, a solemn obligation is imposed on us by the Lord himself, to spend and be spent in the publication of the gospel of God. Is it not the privilege, and should it not be the pleasure, of all Christians to lend their aid and influence in sending the gospel to the destitute, in building up the waste places of Zion, and in effecting a harmonious and vigorous effort in the cause of God?

That a systematic, united, and energetic effort is required of the Baptist Churches in Kentucky, will appear obvious from a few simple facts. Is it not true, that in the bounds of almost every Association in this State, Churches are to be found which have no stated preaching—no settled pastor,—and which seldom meet for religious worship? Is it not known to all, that in many extensive neighborhoods, there is no resident minister of any evangelical denomination, and that the only opportunities of hearing the gospel, occur when a transient minister incidentally passes through their thinly settled country. Do not all see, that the great majority of Baptist Churches assemble but once a month to worship God; and many members of the Churches do not, and some cannot assemble twelve times in the year, to hear the gospel of Christ? Is it not obvious to every one, that the love of many has grown cold; that worldly mindedness and lukewarmness are spreading their deleterious influence over many portions of the Lord's vineyard? And last, though not least, is it not a fact that Christians generally do

not possess, nor exhibit that degree of charity and fervent love for each other, which was found in Christ, his Apostles, and the disciples of the primitive Churches? Where is the Church to be found, whose members, without exception, keep up the worship of God in their families; who daily commune with God, in their closets, on their knees; who read, study, and meditate on his Holy Word; who deny themselves every day, take up their cross and follow Christ; who avoid every appearance of evil; who run the race set before them with patience, looking to Jesus, and who live in all holy conversation and Godliness? Look at the preachers themselves—in labors, in watching, in preaching the word, in humility, in self-denial, in patience, in meekness, in love for the souls of men, in love for one another and the brethren, how far do they fall behind those luminaries of the Church, who flourished in the first century, and by whose labors, under God, the standard of the cross was raised in every pagan city; thousands converted to christianity, numerous Churches gathered from among idolatrous heathens, and the word of God and the ordinances of his house regularly administered to the congregated disciples. And how were these mighty effects produced? Were those ministers free from perils, by land and by sea, in cities and in the wilderness—were they not often beaten with rods—did not bonds and imprisonment await them in every city? Were they not persecuted, reviled, and slandered? Did they not suffer cold, nakedness, and hunger, laboring with their own hands, having no certain dwelling place, and being regarded by their enemies as the offscouring of the world? And yet by these ministers of Christ, was the gospel preached in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Isles of the Mediterranean. Where now is that spirit of Christian enterprize to be found? On whom have the mantles of those departed saints fallen? Who among us forms an equal estimate of the value of one immortal soul? Who is it that warns sinners, night and day, with many tears, to flee from the wrath to come? What minister, like Paul and his companion, visits all the Churches, confirming the souls of the disciples? Who, with the Apostle Peter, can say, “Lord we have left all to follow thee?” Is it not a fact, that our preachers spend but little time in preaching the Word? One goes to his farm, another to his merchandize; one to his school, and another is engaged in politics, or the noisey litigation of the forum? Is it to be wondered at, that while so many

pastors, preachers, and ministers, devote a great part of their time to the service of Cæsar, and deliver on Lord's day a cold, dry, formal sermon, devoid of that holy pathos, that heavenly zeal, with which primitive ministers were inspired, that the Churches should languish, and that iniquity should abound? And can it be expected that the Churches should make much sacrifice for the support of those ministers, who make no sacrifice in the cause of God; who live at ease, and will not turn out into the Lord's field to labor for Him? Who is it that gives himself wholly to the work of the Lord, and studies to show himself "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," and giving to every one his portion in due season, that is neglected by the Churches? Let no piteous moans and lamentations be made by preachers over their parsimonious congregations, till they themselves be found faithful to their trust. Do not all the Churches know, that no man goes to war at his own charge; that those who preach the gospel *should* live of the gospel? Yes, verily. But the Churches have too much intelligence, too high a sense of justice and propriety to maintain a set of idle drones. Is not almost every minister amply compensated for the *time* he devotes to any particular Church? Let such preachers go forth as shall be approved by the Churches; let them devote their time exclusively to preaching; let them be such men as God approves, and whose, labors he crowns with success, and we may confidently rely on the liberality of the Churches for their support.

Brethren, we invite you to meet us in convention—not to legislate for God's Churches; not to form an ecclesiastical court over Churches and Associations. The Church is the highest ecclesiastical power on earth; but we invite you to meet us in Convention, that we may know each other, and learn the condition of the different parts of the state, and mutually co-operate in preaching the gospel to every creature, and aid in sustaining the actual laborers. If the Apostles and the brethren from Antioch and other places, met in *convention* at Jerusalem, and declared to each other what God had wrought by them; if ministers were sent, or went as volunteers, one here and another there, so that the gospel was fully preached in all places; if the Apostles, with their associates, could and did preach the gospel in the whole Roman empire in a few years, surely, we who are not oppressed, not persecuted, not im-

prisoned, who are not cold, naked, and hungry, can, through the grace of God, fully preach the gospel in Kentucky. Let us lay aside all jealousy and distrust, and unite to unfurl the blood-stained banner of the Cross of Christ. Ye officers in the army of the living God, think not of pre-eminence; let him that is greatest be the servant of all; banish rivalry, seek honor from the captain of our salvation, and in this day of trial and danger, let us stand by each other as a band of brethren.

Finally, remember we are brethren, friends of Christ, friends of his people; and we hereby pledge ourselves, through his grace, to be active in his cause; to bear hardness as good soldiers of Christ; to strive for the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, and to maintain the faith once delivered to the saints; to be instant in season, and out of season; to preach the gospel with all long suffering and patience; to seek the salvation of souls, the prosperity, union, and fellowship of the Churches; and let us put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man which is renewed after the image of him that redeemed us. Let us obey Christ in all things, so far as God may grant us grace to perform his holy will.

Now, unto him that is able to do exceeding, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The following preamble and resolutions were read and adopted, viz:

We, the representatives and delegates from a number of the Baptist Churches and Associations in different parts of the State, all having the same object in view, but differing in opinion as to the best means of accomplishing the same end, and having adopted a Constitution upon the principles of mutual concession, and a proper deference for the opinions of each other—with a firm reliance on Almighty God for his blessing on what we have done—do agree that we will use our best endeavours in our respective Churches and Associations, to explain the objects and designs of this Convention; to form new auxiliaries, and collect funds in aid of its revenue.

Resolved, That brethren Clack, Carpenter, Thomson, Shannon, and Wingate, be a committee to take the most effectual means, in their judgment, for the establishment of a *Weekly Newspaper*, under the patronage and in aid of the great objects of this Convention.

Brother Sieg moved the following resolution, which was read and adopted:

Resolved, That the next annual meeting of this Convention be held in the City of Lexington, on the last Saturday in May, 1833.

Brother King moved the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted, *to-wit*:

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention are due to the citizens of Bardstown, for the very hospitable and polite manner in which we have been entertained during our stay among them.

Brother Clack moved the following resolution, which was read and adopted, viz :

Resolved, That this Convention will hold an adjourned meeting at New-Castle, Henry county, on the third Saturday in October next.

On motion of Brother Chambers :

Resolved, That Brethren Noel, Shannon, and Wingate, be a committee to prepare rules for the government of this Convention, whilst in session.

Brother Clack was appointed to deliver an introductory sermon at the next meeting of the Convention, and in case of failure, brother Bryce his alternate.

Brother Chambers moved the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted :

Resolved, That in view of the prevalence of vice and error, and of the languid state of Zion in many parts of this state, this Convention recommends to the brethren generally within the state to set apart the last Friday in May next for *fasting, humiliation, and prayer*, to Almighty God to revive his work among the Churches and people, and for the prevalence and triumph of evangelical truth.

Brother Clack moved the following resolution, which was read and adopted, viz :

Resolved, That 1000 copies of the proceedings of this Convention be printed under the superintendence of the Moderator and Clerk, in large octavo form, on good paper, and distributed among the Churches and Associations.

Resolved, That the editors of the Baptist Chronicle, Western Pioneer, and Baptist Weekly Journal, be respectfully requested to publish the constitution and proceedings of this Convention in their respective papers.

Having completed their business, the Convention adjourned *sine die*.

Closed with prayer by Brother Bacon.

Signed,

SILAS M. NOEL, *Moderator*.

H. WINGATE, *Clerk*.

During the session of the Convention there was much preaching, exhortation, praise, and prayer. There was, doubtless, a deep and solemn interest manifested by the listening crowds. Many were awakened, and we trust not a few renewed. Six were received and baptized on Lord's day.

Coxe's Creek, a large Church in the vicinity of the Convention, was visited by some of the brethren. There too were witnessed the most lively indications of a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.