

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION**

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**Thursday Morning, October 4, 2007**

The Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptists convened in its 155<sup>th</sup> annual session with Pilgrim's Rest Church, Rogersville, Tennessee.

The 1860's saw great turmoil in our country. Brother fought against brother and as in Moses' day, before the slaves could have freedom, many first-born sons had to die. So it was here in Poor Valley that the Civil War had a great affect. Already poor, the war devastated the land and the economy. The people turned to the only constant in their lives – God. They began by holding cottage prayer meetings during the war and as their men began to slowly return home, crippled in mind and body, the need was even greater. On the third Sunday in March of 1887, they met for the purpose of finally establishing a church. It was agreed to call it "Pilgrim's Rest." After all they had gone through, surely that name was inspired by God. William Henard was elected pastor. Charter members were: E. A. Henard, Elizabeth Henard, Martha Brooks, Thomas Lipe, Susan Courtney, Rebecca Henard and Elijah Henard. Some of these were Confederate soldiers.

The building was also to be used as a school, which was common for that time. Hard feelings from the war were not put away overnight. We are told that is why we have two cemeteries – one side for Union and one side for Confederate.

After the church was fully organized, they joined the Southwestern branch of the Eastern District Association. At the September Association meeting in 1900, it was agreed that Pilgrim's Rest would host the association the following year. Recently, Brother Mike Davis found a letter among a relative's papers that was written by the church in August of 1901 to Elder Peters, the Moderator of the Association. This letter states "a drought of major proportions has crops failing and there will be no grass for all the horses. It just seems impossible for the church to host the association this year." The letter is signed by the entire church and just sounds hopeless. Apparently, a whole lot of praying went on, because one month later we read in the minutes of the September session of the Eastern District Association where the people of Pilgrim's Rest have stepped out on faith and God has provided a way and has met with this great body and richly blessed one more time.

In our one hundred twenty year history, we have been served by several pastors, many who have gone on to their reward. Men like: J. L. Dykes, Elmer Wallen, Ralph Cook, Farris Bundren, Joe Hickman, John Purkey, Theodore Russell, Logan Willis, Charlie White, Ben Hill, George Lifford, Cecil Collins, Gordon Justice, Virgil Lipe and currently David Smith. There may have been others in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Some of the records were burned in a house fire and all we have is word of mouth.

The pulpit here at Pilgrim's Rest has been a place for many young men starting their ministry to have a place to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Rev. George Martin testified of being saved here at Pilgrim's Rest on

Christmas Eve 1915. He then preached and pastored churches over East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

Our goal is to see our people saved. With this objective in mind, we joined with Maple Hill in 1987, every 5th weekend for what has become known as our "Valley Revival." We alternate churches and at this time thousands of messages have been preached, great numbers of men have stood to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus Christ and some have announced their calling to the ministry. We have Bible School every year as another outreach. The Shepherd left the 99 to seek after that one lost lamb. It could be a child, husband, wife, brother, sister, neighbor or friend. Let's just reach out in love and do as our forefathers did back in the days of the Civil War. Let's hold on to the one sure thing we have – God's unchanging hand.

The Lord blessed us with some much needed rain during the morning of our first day of this grand gathering. He knows our needs better than we do. God blessed Sister Zula McCullough to once again lead the congregation in singing songs of praise for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We receive only a foretaste of what it will be like just over in the glory land. Here we cling to the old rugged cross, for it is here the dearest and blessed were pardoned and sanctified by His blood. We long to see our Savior's face, but as we tarry here, His unseen hand will guide us to that golden strand where we'll praise Him forevermore. Heaven holds all to us, but brighter its glory will be; for it is joy without measure. Here we are watching, waiting for God's pearly white city where we'll praise Him like He deserves. There'll be no disappointment in heaven, for we will be home with our blessed Redeemer. We were further blessed with wonderful testimonies and shouts of praise.

Elder Terry Sizemore, moderator of the association, thanked God for all the blessings of the Lord. What a wonderful place to rest on our journey here. Thank Him for all the showers He has blessed us with. Welcome and may the Lord lead you in His holy spirit for if we will do that, He will bless us with an association beyond measure. Elder Sizemore mentioned the names of several of our elders that have gone on to be with the Lord since we last gathered. Elder John Henry Sybert served this association as moderator for 33 years and attended for 72 consecutive years, Elders Howard Sybert, Frank Mullins, Odus Caudill, Ray Raleigh, Eldridge Albright and Billy Johnson. We miss these men tremendously, but we praise God for their lives and what they meant to us here in this life. We pray God will continue to comfort and bless their families in the coming years. Sister Zula led the congregation in singing what has become the association standard, "Brethren We Have Met Again." We have met to worship Him in truth and spirit. For those who are meeting with us for the first time, we welcome you and pray the Lord will make you feel welcome.

The moderator appointed the Committee on Religious Exercise, which includes: Terrell Smith (Chairman), Joe Robinette and Doug Willis.

Prayer requests were made for: the unsaved, Earl Vaughn, Delmer Wallen, Sr., Enlo Derrick, Mary W. Johnson, Paul Wallen, Elder Hasco Jenkins, Odell

Arnott, Edith Eldridge, Jim Jarnigan's sister and many unspoken requests signified by uplifted hands all over the tent. Elder Jim Jarnigan took our petitions to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

We were further blessed with singing from Brother Null Lawson. If we know the Lord, we know He lives in us.

Elder Virgil Lipe welcomed everyone to Pilgrim's Rest as he came forward to take the first part of the service. He read St. John 11: 38-44 using as his text "Loose him, and let him go." When Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," he did just that. We need to loose him in our lives so others can see Jesus. We can't do anything except Jesus allows us to. Kings the world over strive for power, getting trapped in the struggle. Sometimes we get caught up in worldly things, but let us not only put God first in our lives, but let us keep Him there. We must run the race set before us. God will settle things in our lives if we will loose him and let him go. We know God has not changed; may He help us to know the changes in our life so we can make things right with Him. Let us get our lives right and pray, so God will send us more young people to carry on the tasks at hand. If we ask ourselves, "Do we want God in our lives?" Hopefully, we can answer an astounding, "yes." Elder David Smith followed with another wonderful message from on high after reading Mark 1: 27. We hear of many doctrines in our world today, but in reality there is only one doctrine, Jesus Christ. We were bought with a price and for that we have eternal life. This old body will go back to the dust of the earth, but God's children will live eternally with the Lord in glory. In ourselves we are nothing, nor can we do anything, but with Jesus in our life we have the power to do anything. We must separate ourselves from the world that the world might see Jesus in our life. He will make us what we ought to be, instead of what we are. These men preached so wonderfully, praise His holy name!

Adjourned for lunch.

### **Thursday Afternoon, October 4, 2007**

The host church served a delicious meal as the Lord continued to bless us with some much needed rain. The congregation came together in the tent as Sister Zula McCullough led them in singing several songs of praise. Won't it be wonderful where the half has never been told? Joy unspeakable and full of glory is ours when we come humbly before the Lord. A hope so bright and clear, we can see His smiling face. The dearest thing we'll ever know is that Jesus loves us.

We were further blessed with special singing and wonderful testimonies from Loretta Emery, Jerry Scalf, Terry and Peggy Sizemore, Naomi Adkins and Jason Robinette. The talents of the Lord's people are tremendous. He did it all for us and we have never been the same since Jesus made us a walking, talking miracle. From His glistening throne, Jesus smiles upon His own, oh I tell you that is where I want to go. When we stand on top of Mt. Zion, we'll never walk in the valley alone because Jesus our Lord will hold to

our hand. When we look around and see all the blessings, it is then we realize we have so much to thank Him for. We are free from the bondage of sin. Jesus came from heaven one day to show us the way, and then He got on a cloud and went home. It is wonderful to know we have a new home not made with hands. Their wonderful songs and testimonies blessed us and we thank God for them.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone to the afternoon service and thanked the host church for the wonderful lunch. He then read the report from the Committee on Religious Exercises.

Thursday night:

Flower Gap: David VanHoose, Vernon Shaw and Jason Robinette

Friday morning, October 5, 2007:

Stand: Charley Johnson and Josh Couch

Prayer requests include those made in the morning service, Ellen Dalton, Dorthy Delp, Nettie Roberts, Arden Gergen, Josh and Justin Jones, Edith Eldridge, Bonnie Harris, Colby Johnson, Joe Cox, Rosie Johnson's sister, Maggie Lawson, L. E. Hill, Judith Duncan, Henry and Launa Wheeler, Bill Maggard, all those serving our country, Allen Hensley and many more the clerk could not get. Many unspoken requests were signified by uplifted hands. We were humbly led to throne of grace by Brother Gleason Storie.

Brother Jim Wilder reminded us in song that we must never fail to cling to and cherish the old rugged cross.

Brother Steve Minton, Chairman of the Committee on Church Letters, came forward to give the report of our state and standing. A total of 64 churches were recommended to be accepted by the committee. It was motioned, seconded and voted to accept the recommendations of the committee and seat those delegates duly elected or appointed by their respective churches as the voting body of the association. The chairman further explained that the letter from Peterson's Chapel had been tabled because the letter was presided over by the then current church moderator, but had since been signed by the present moderator. This was explained to the church delegates and they were in agreement with full understanding as to why the letter was tabled. It was motioned, seconded and voted to accept the recommendations of the committee.

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

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

It was motioned and seconded for Brother Danny Lawson to serve as clerk and treasurer. It was motioned, seconded and voted for nominations to cease. By acclamation he will serve for the ensuing year.

It was motioned and seconded for Elder Terry Sizemore to serve as moderator of the association. It was motioned, seconded and voted for nominations to cease. By acclamation Elder Sizemore will serve as moderator for the ensuing year.

Elder Sizemore, speaking for himself and the clerk, thanked the delegation for their confidence, support and prayers. He asked them to be led by the spirit in all things, especially those of the church. God works in all things and we especially need Him to lead and guide us while serving this grand body.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the moderator to appoint any and all committees. The moderator appointed the following committees:

Committee on Newly Constituted Churches: Ministers – Roger Trent (chairman), Jim Emery and Burnice Sybert; Deacons – Bradley Bowen and Ralph Baker; Laymen – John Collins and Jack Osborne.

Committee on Finance: Eckel Head (chairman), Derrick Cantwell and Scott Tipton.

Committee on Obituaries: Jason Robinette (chairman), Shane Russell and Jim Lykins.

Committee on Arrangements and/or Queries: Oscar Irvin (chairman), Greg Hill, Roger VanHoose, John Arnott, James Jarnigan, Lewis Baker and Richard Seiber.

Committee on Electrical and PA System: Delmer McPherson (chairman), Elders David Jerrell and Virgil Lipe, Scott Mellons, Bobby Caudill, Eric McPherson and Danny Lawson. Brother Delmer McPherson came forward to give his report for the committee. He informed the delegation that due to some problems they have been experiencing with the amplifier, the association should consider replacing it in the near future. It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the committee to locate and purchase a suitable replacement for next year.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to have all things which are standard printed in the minutes.

The association clerk gave a financial report for all receipts and monies spent this year.

The moderator informed the delegation of several things as follows:

- A school absence form was available from the clerk if anyone needs one.
- The committee to investigate the possibility of getting a trailer to haul and store the association tent, chairs and other equipment

recommends not pursuing this any further due to the all the details involved in transporting it across our highways. No further comments were made, so the association will not pursue this any further.

- Reminded everyone that we are an association of churches and while we have our association rules of decorum, there are some things the association cannot do. The association will help in any manner possible, but the individual churches must still continue to handle normal church affairs.
- It was great to see Sister Stella Sybert here with us in today's meeting.

Elder Burnice Sybert came forward to thank everyone for all their prayers and everything they did during the passing of his father, Elder John Henry Sybert. He also noted that this being the clerk's 19<sup>th</sup> year of service, our present clerk is the longest standing clerk in the history of the association.

The business being concluded, the delegation was dismissed until Friday morning, October 5, 2007.

Brother Junior Bradley from Maple Hill Church led the congregation in singing of God's amazing grace.

## **Friday Morning, October 5, 2007**

The second day of this wonderful gathering was blessed with smiling faces and warm embraces. Sister Zula McCullough led this grand old body in song. God has drawn us nearer through His wonderful mercy. It won't be very long till we will meet our Lord and King up yonder in the sky. When the roll is called up yonder, will you be there? Let us labor for the Master, so that when our work on earth is over we can say it is well with our soul. All our sins were nailed to the cross with Jesus, not in part but the whole. Testimonies and shouts of praise rang out as God blessed His children.

We were further blessed with testimonies and song from Brother Joe Sizemore. Just inside those gates of pearl we'll learn a lot of things, we'll suffer no more and we'll celebrate that grand homecoming week the first ten thousand years.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone to today's service while thanking God for all His blessings. This wonderful reunion we are gathered at today is but a taste of what's in store. The spirit of God reveals Him to us. Our prayer is that some lost soul might accept Him as their personal Savior at this association. He makes us fit subjects for the kingdom of God.

We need to continue to pray for the unsaved, all the requests from yesterday, those serving our country in the military; Terrell Smith, Steve Minton, Lowell Johnson, Justin Johnson, Bill Maggard, Della Haddack, Gene Greer, Dustin and Adam Lawson and many unspoken requests signified by

uplifted hands. Elder Scott Tipton took our petitions to the Lord in an old fashioned altar of prayer.

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 with one addition to the list of ministers that had passed from us since last year. Elder Eldridge Albright's name will be added to those names mentioned in Thursday's service.

The singers from Pilgrim's Rest Church and the daughters of Walter Lipe blessed us with their wonderful songs and testimonies. We are pilgrims and strangers here, but we are never alone for He is ever with us. Heartaches and trials are many, but we can always lean on His strong arm. Jesus will touch us and bring us out of any problems we may be faced with. Let us see the coming of the Lord, for He is in everything and His truth will march on throughout eternity. Beulah land is a place where time won't matter anymore and no sad goodbyes will ever be spoken. Here we lean on Jesus every hour of every day, but our new home will be eternal. We are redeemed by His mercy and saved by His grace, so let us sing His praises wherever we go, listening to the story of our Savior who rolled the stone away.

Elder Charley Johnson, having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, came forward to take the first part of the service. He never got around to reading any scripture, but advised that we ask God and seek Him. You might say, "ask Him what?" We can ask God anything, for He is willing and able to deliver all things. If God was coming by, would you call out to Him? We need to seek His will in our lives. God will not dwell where He is not wanted. If we want God in our lives, we need to ask. If we want our people to be saved, we need to ask. We can ask many things, but when we ask, we have to believe that God is not only able, but that He will deliver. Unless we believe, God will not answer. Elder Josh Couch read the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation and brought us another wonderful message from on high. In Christ we are overcomers. He knows our needs more so than we do. The only way we can overcome Satan is to take him to the Lord. He establishes our going and lets us reason together. Jesus Christ will bring changes in a person's life. Our treasures should be laid up in heaven instead of in this old world. God wonderfully blessed these men to preach the gospel and for this we give Him all the honor, praise and glory.

Elder A. D. Howington led the congregation in a song as we adjourned for lunch.

## **Friday Afternoon, October 5, 2007**

After a delicious lunch served by the host church, the congregation came together in the tent with songs of praise. When we are cast down, we can swing out on our Savior's promises and He will whisper sweet peace to us. In the sweet by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore, never to worry about the cares of this life again. We were further blessed by singing and

testimony from Aubra Hill, Wilma Bledsoe and Doris Burke. The wonderful face of our Savior is leading us home as He guides our footsteps. When the Savior calls, we will be listening and if our heart is right we will hear His call.

Elder Sizemore thanked the church for the wonderful lunch and thanked God for such a wonderful place to be. The same God that looked down on Peter is the same God we serve right here and now. Our prayer is that some lost soul will come to know this man called Jesus. Let us continue to pray for them.

Prayer requests were made for all those in the previous services, the unsaved, A. D. Howington's son, our older members that are not able to come, Monnie Bledsoe, Sue Giles, Georgia Sage, Ralph Lindsey, Edith Eldridge, the revivals, Delmer Wallen, Sr., John Osborne, Jr., Eugene Wallen, Eckel Head, Micah Russell, Dennis Perkins, and many unspoken requests. Elder Greg Hill led us to the throne of grace in a most humble prayer.

The delegation was seated in order to transact the business.

Billy Jack Johnson, chairman of the Letter Committee, came forward to discuss a problem with the church letters in general. He offered a suggestion to the delegation that a place be made on the church letter where the moderator's name could be printed and he could sign it just below this. It was also recommended that the clerk's name be done the same way. It was motioned, seconded and voted to have association clerk make any necessary changes to the church letter form.

The moderator announced that Brian McPherson volunteered to make copies of association CD's for anyone that might want them.

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

Friday night:

Liberty Chapel: Oscar Irvin, Joe Pitzer and Roger VanHoose

Long Hollow: Mike Fullington, Bill Winstead, Bill VanHoose, and  
Carson Johnson

New Life: Harold Shaw and Jason Robinette

Oak Grove: Revival meeting with Virgil Lipe and Jerry Scalf

Saturday morning, October 6, 2007:

Stand: Terry Sizemore and Oscar Irvin

Saturday night:

Guthrie's Gap: Bill VanHoose

Liberty Chapel: Burnice Sybert, Mike Fullington and John Arnott

Poplar Grove: Roger VanHoose and Joe Pitzer

Roller's Chapel: anyone who wishes to come

Sulphur Springs: Gordon Justice



The moderator appointed the Committee on Church Letters for 2008, which includes Billy Jack Johnson (chairman), Bill Maggard, Gary Henard and Ralph Baker (alternate).

The Committee on Finance reported \$8,630.00 in receipts for the year.

The Committee on Obituaries reported that 66 have been received at this time.

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

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

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

It was motioned, seconded and voted that the host church will be responsible for the maintenance of the kitchen, with any needed repairs to be paid for by the clerk of the association.

It was motioned, seconded and voted to allow the clerk \$1,000 in appreciation for his services.

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

Elders Bill VanHoose, Roger Trent and Woodrow Fields came forward as members of the Circular Letter Committee to present their letter to this grand body. Each of these brethren spoke of all the things God has done for them in their life. The letter is intended for the association at large that we might walk in the love of Jesus in everything we do. It was motioned, seconded and voted to print it in the minutes as read.

The moderator appointed the Circular Letter Committee for 2008, which includes: Elders Mike Fullington, Jamie Jarnigan and Joe Pitzer.

An offering was taken up to help defer the cost of purchasing the new PA system equipment. A total of \$1,625.00 was collected.

Before the process of deciding where the association will meet next year began, the moderator reminded the delegation that only those chosen or appointed by their respective churches as delegates were allowed to vote. There were 6 churches that asked for the association to meet with them next year. These are: Blackwater Lick, Fairview (OH), Little Cowan, Pilgrim's Rest, Richardson Chapel and Riverside. Before the plea process started, Riverside and Pilgrim's Rest withdrew. During the plea process, Blackwater Lick withdrew, leaving the vote between Fairview (OH), Little Cowan and Richardson Chapel. The majority of the votes fell almost evenly between Little Cowan and Fairview (OH). Upon hearing these results, the church at

Fairview (OH) withdrew, resulting in a clear majority, to send the association to Little Cowan, where the Lord willing we will convene on Thursday morning, (October 2, 2008) before the first Saturday in October, 2008. Introductory – Elder John Banks; Alternate – Elder Brad Dutton.

Adjourned until Saturday morning, October 6, 2007.

### **Saturday Morning, October 6, 2007**

Our memorial service began with smiling faces and cheerful greetings as the bright sunshine shown round about. As the congregation gathered in the tent, Sister Zula McCullough started the service with several songs of praise. On the streets of glory we'll lift our voice ever to rejoice with our blessed Redeemer. The sweet assurance we received when Jesus saved us is enough to get us through the trials and tribulations in this life. When we are happy in Jesus, December is as pleasant as June; for His presence disburses all gloom. Precious memories linger near and flood our soul as we recall those gone on before us. In the stillness of the midnight, many sacred scenes unfold and our hope grows fonder. Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, for soon the bridegroom cometh and we'll know the joy of that glad meeting just inside the eastern gate.

Those attending today's service were especially blessed with special singing and wonderful testimonies from Joe Pitzer, Bill Winstead and the Sulphur Springs singers, Phillip Little, Mt. Mitchell singers, Roger VanHoose and Terry Sizemore. Jesus paid the sin debt with His precious blood and it is still the blood that cleanses from sin and brings victory to us. It is joy to know we are nearing the shore of our home sweet home where Jesus will say, "Welcome, come in and rest." When we've traveled our last mile, we'll enter that lifeboat where He'll hold to our hand as over death's river we go. We'll see many saints of old in heaven, the home of the soul, and we'll get to see His face. There is coming a day where all is peace on that happy golden shore. What a day, glorious day that will be when we look upon His face. While we may not understand it, we are just thrilled and amazed how God saves old sinners, but the biggest surprise is that He would save old sinners like us. As we walk the streets of gold in that fair city, there'll be no sorrow nor pain and we can shout, "we're safe at last." Our real home is up there on high, for we belong to a King that welcomes us with outstretched arms. Thank God we are free from this world of sin, for we are saved, saved, saved by His wonderful grace. Through it all, we found out He would bring us out and show us the way.

Elder Sizemore welcomed everyone to our memorial service, once again thanking Jesus for the many blessings. We are so thankful that Jesus rose on that third and appointed day. Wonderful testimonies from several folks blessed our hearts and let us know He is still in control of all things. If you don't know what was seen and felt here today, please ask God to show you the true way. We, the Redeemed of the Lord need to stand up and offer our praise, for we are the ones who need to edify His holy name. Our heart's

desire is that someone will come to the Lord and be saved. Man can't bring salvation; it can only come through Jesus.

Prayer requests for all those in previous services, unsaved, Jim Burke, young ladies' children. Elder Burnice Sybert gave a wonderful testimony and an earnest plea for everyone. We know the Lord has not changed, so we must examine our life to find what has changed that we might return to the old paths and experience the services we all remember from our early childhood. Let us never stop praying for God to save our lost people. Elder Sybert humbly took our petitions to the Lord in a soul stirring prayer.

The delegation was seated in order to transact the business.

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

The Committee on Religious Exercise conveyed they had no additional information to report.

Elder David Smith, pastor of host church, came forward to thank everyone for all their help. He also extended a special thank you to Elder Gordon Justice for all he has meant to Pilgrim's Rest Church over the years.

The moderator reminded the delegation that Sister Eileen Brown still sends out notices of revivals and special services. Please let her know by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for the announcement to be included in the next month's announcements.

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.

The moderator read the list of names of those that have left our ranks since we last met. Many of our loved ones have gone on to their reward since we last gathered. We cherish the fond memories of these dear saints of God. While we miss them, we know they are in a far better land and would not want to come back if they could. We praise God for having known them, for what they meant to us and most of all for the stand they took for Jesus. May the Lord continue to bless the families of these brave soldiers of the cross.

Having been chosen by the Committee on Religious Exercises, Elder Terry Sizemore came forward to take the first part of the service. Let us honor the memories of those gone on to their reward by obeying the spirit of the precious Lamb of God. Reading from Philippians 2: 1-14, he used as a thought the 5<sup>th</sup> verse, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Let us come with the mindset we had as children that we might come forth to do the work of the Lord. He came down and took upon Him the nature of man that He could become the supreme sacrifice. He became sin that we don't have to answer for anymore. We may not know how to live our life, but if we have Jesus in our heart, we know He will show us. Let us be careful not to look unto our own things, but those of God. Let us walk humbly and circumspectly before the world that we would be pleasing to Christ.

Christ came willingly to overcome the excuses man would have. May we never act like Christians, but be Christians. Let us be led of His spirit that we may serve and please Him. Do as the Lord instructed, not what man might say. Elder Oscar Irvin took the second part of the service, preaching another wonderful message given him by the Lord. We gather to honor, glorify and do the will of Jesus Christ. He set the example and order of things we are to follow. Adorn in love to honor and worship Him. He was willing to lay down His life that we would have a way to follow Him. This old body of clay has no light except that which God placed within us. It will one day go down in weakness, but it'll be raised in victory. He laid aside all His splendor and took on a robe of flesh to pay the debt we owed. A river flows in each of us to let us know we are the sons of God. We are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb, and without His blood and without His spirit we are none of His. The work is great and the laborers few. The way of God's children is an easy way, but the way of the transgressor is hard. We are alive and alive forevermore. Such wonderful preaching from God above through these men is truly a blessing. Thank God for them and all our preaching brethren who stand to share the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Many seem to have lost the love for this grand body over the years. The interest in the association is waning, so each of our church pastors should stand and tell the flock about this grand body.

Elder Sizemore thanked God for the message this morning. As we adjourned for lunch, Elder Roger VanHoose led us in songs of praise. Shouts of praise and tears of joy were abundant throughout the tent as we adjourned for the day. Our service today was very special in that we just couldn't quit. I was thrilled just to be able stand there and watch our precious Savior bless His children. Praise His holy name! There is no stopping place when it comes to praising our blessed Redeemer.

## **Sunday Morning, October 7, 2007**

Our time together has swiftly come and gone, but we thank God for being here in our midst. The last day may be a solemn occasion, but it is also a time of rejoicing. Brother Don Gordon led the congregation in singing some wonderful songs of Zion. On that resurrection morning we'll have a new body and a new life, where there'll be no more pain or strife. The saved of God have never been sorry they trusted His blessed holy name. Just as His word tells us, He is exactly the same. How sweet the sound of God's amazing grace which has brought us safe thus far and will lead us safely home. If a lost soul asks you for help, could you help them?

Elder David Smith, pastor of the host church, welcomed everyone to today's service as he praised God for His amazing grace. His grace is sufficient for our every need. We pray the Lord might speak to some lost soul.

Prayer requests were made for the lost in all our communities, all those of previous services, each other, wonderful testimonies, many special requests,

sick among us, J. R. South's daughter, Nancy Bledsoe and her family, Doris Gordon's brother and many unspoken requests signified with uplifted hands. Elder Von Burton led us to the throne of grace.

We were further blessed with singing from Vakesha Henard, the children of the church, Walter Lipe's daughters, Brandy Couch, and Doris Gordon. Sing hallelujah, for Jesus is alive and alive forevermore! Don't be discouraged, for Jesus is still the same and will be there right on time. He walks with us each and every day from the lowest valley to the highest hill and across the stormy seas. They hung our Lord upon a tree for crimes He had not done, but the grave couldn't hold Him, He is risen as He said. We must keep walking in the light of the Lord. If we get moving in the right direction, then nothing can stop us on our journey here. So many times we get in a form of godliness, but we need to loose Him and let Him go. We must not fail to assemble ourselves together. Our sins are in God's sea of forgetfulness. We are not what we used to be, for there's been a miraculous change in each of God's children.

We thank God for all the visiting ministers that were in attendance at today's services. Every preacher in attendance preached at one time or another and at times several were preaching at the same time. There were no dry eyes as God's children shouted and praised Him all over the church house. I wish I could write the words or find some way to convey what happened at this little church today, but I know of no way except to say you had to be here to experience the tremendous blessings today. We speak many times how the Lord has blessed in a service, but today we witnessed His holy spirit coming down in ways not seen in a while. God's children did loose Him and let Him go and we witnessed just a taste of what is in store for the children of God.

The Pilgrim's Rest choir blessed us with their song. We must roll our burdens on Him. What would we do without Jesus? We couldn't make it without Him.

Mere words can not express what a tremendous Savior we serve. His blessings are beyond words, but I still find myself trying to describe a love so great that all other love pales in comparison. I pray the Lord will bestow upon you blessings that can't be gained, saved nor denied.

## **CIRCULAR LETTER**

This circular letter is written for the 155<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Eastern District Association of Primitive Baptist Churches in Rogersville Tennessee, the delegation, the visitors and all who may read in the years to come.

We have met at Pilgrim's Rest to worship the Lord and fellowship together in the love that God placed in our hearts when we were born into His family. We want to praise the Lord with all of our hearts all the days of our lives, for He is worthy.