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Baptists. Maine. Bowdoinham Association, 1794.

Minutes . . . at Ballston, August 27th, and 28th, 1794.

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MINUTES

OF THE

BOWDOINHAM ASSOCIATION,

HELD AT

BALLSTON,

AUGUST 27th, and 28th, 1794.



Wednesday, August 27th.

1. **A**T two o'clock, P. M. Elder Eliphalet Smith preached the introductory sermon; from Rev. 14, 4. *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*

2. Proceeded to the choice of a moderator, and Clerk.

3. Read letters from the several churches; and took an account of the members that have been added, dismissed, excluded, or died the last year; and the present number in each church.

N. B. Ordained Minister's names in small Capitals—Licenced preachers in Italicks. Those marked thus * were not present.

<i>Churches,</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Disf.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Num.</i>
Bowdoinham,	{ JOB MACOMBER, Joshua Bailey, Seth Hathorn, Thomas Dintmore	8			40
Harpswell,	{ *SAM. WOODWARD Ezekiel Spalding.	1			52
Thomaston,	{ FLISHA SNOW, James Weed, James Stackpole, Richard Kating.	2			100
Bowdoin,	{ JAMES POTTER, *Humphry Purinton James Alexander.	3	1		41
Vassalborough,	{ Nehemiah Gould, Stephen Beiden.	3			36
Ballston,	{ Solomon Potter, Thomas Day.	5			24
Sydney,	{ ASA WILBUR, LEMUEL JACKSON Samuel Ward, Mephibosheth Cain.	10	1		44
2. Bowdoin,	{ WILM. STINSON, Barthol. Taylor, Thos. Morgridge.	11	1		45
Hebron,	{ William Bumpus, Jepthah Benson.	2	1		39
Buckfield,	{ Nathan Chace, Samuel Blake.	4			30
Paris,	{ Benjamin Hammon Moses Stevens.	6		1	26
Lewistown,	{ Benjamin Merrill, Abner Harris.	24	15		59

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Num.</i>
Readfield,	{ ISAAC CASE, William Briggs, William Richards.	9	3		75
Sterling,	{ ELIPHALET SMITH Jeremiah Richards, Oliver Billings.	8	2		43
Miscongun Island,	{ ANDREW FULLER, Barney Fountain, Ephraim Carter.	4			27
Cushing,	{ *EPHRAIM HALL, Benjamin Burton, Sampson Sweetland	23			49
Nobleborough,	Jesse Flint.	2			14
Livermore,	Elisha Williams.	34			55
Greene,	{ Lemuel Comins, Benjamin Cole.	19		1	47
NewSandwich	Isaac Dexter.				17
3 Bowdoin,	{ Phillip Jenkins, Samuel Simmons, Seth Hinkley.				24
<i>Total,</i>		178	24	2	887

[Two were excluded from the association, both of whom belonged to Bowdoin.]

N B. The two last mentioned Churches, were received into union this year.

4. Read a letter and minutes from the New-hampshire association. Messenger, Brother Peter Moores. Also, Read minutes from the Warren association.

5. There being present some members from the

sister associations, and this association, who were not chosen as messengers ; Voted that they take a seat with us.

6. Chose Elder Fuller to prepare a corresponding letter to the sister associations. Adjourned till tomorrow morning, 8 o'clock.

Thursday morning—Met according to adjournment.

7. Read, approved and adopted the circular letter prepared by brother Joshua Young. Likewise read and adopted the corresponding letter to the sister associations prepared by brother Fuller.

8. Voted that Elder Case be our messenger to the Warren association ; and Elder Snow, and Elder Smith to the New Hampshire association.

9. Having noticed a request of the Warren association—Chose Elder Case to attend the general Committee at Sturbridge—Furnished him with a letter for the same purpose.

10. Chose brother Harris Treasurer to the association.

11. Chose Elder Potter, Elder Snow, Elder Fuller, brother Young and brother Williams, to prepare articles of faith and a covenant against the next year.

12. Chose brother Williams to prepare a circular letter against the next year.

13. A question proposed by the Church of Walsborough, desiring the association's opinion on Heb. 6 ch. 4, 5, 6 vrs. Also, another question from Sydney, desiring the opinion of the association on Matt. 11 ch. 12 vr. Voted, to suspend giving our opinion till the next association ; and chose elder Potter, elder Snow, and brother James

Hooper, committee, to consider of the foregoing questions, and make report at the next association.

14. A question asked, *viz* Is it not agreeable to Apostolic order, that deacons should be set apart by imposition of hands?—Answered in the affirmative.

S U P P L I E S.

Vassalborough—Elder Wilbur, 3d Lord's-day in September; Elder Macomber, 3d in December; Elder Case, 3d in March; and Elder Jackson, 3d in June.—*Ballyton*—Elder Wilbur, 1st Lord's day in September; Elder Fuller, 1st in December; Elder Case, 2d in March; and Elder Jackson, 4th in June.—*Nobleborough*—Elder Fuller, 2d Lord's day in September; Elder Snow, 2d in December; Elder Hall, 3d in March; and Elder Potter, 3d in June.—*Buckfield*—Elder Woodward, 2d Lord's day in October; Elder Snow, 2d in January; Elder Case, 2d in June; and Elder Hall, 2d in August.—*Hebron*—Elder Woodward, 3d Lord's day in October; Elder Snow, 3d in January; Elder Case, 3d in June; and Elder Hall, 3d in August.—*Paris*—Elder Woodward, 4th Lord's day in October; Elder Snow, 4th in January; Elder Case, 4th in June; and Elder Hall, 1st in August.—*Lewistown*—Elder Smith, 1st Lord's day in October; Elder Stinson, 1st in January; Elder Potter, 1st in March; and Elder Fuller, 1st in June.—*Greene*—Elder Smith, 2d Lord's day in October; Elder Stinson, 2d in January; Elder Potter, 2d in March; and Elder Fuller, 2d in June.—*Livermore*—Elder Stinson, 4th Lord's day in October; Elder Case, 4th in December; Elder Potter, 4th in February; and

Elder Smith, 4th in April.—*New Sandwich*—Elder Jackson, 1st Lord's day in September ; Elder Smith, 1st in December ; Elder Wilbur, 1st in March ; and Elder Jackson, 1st in June.—By request from *Turner*—Elder Potter, 3d Lord's day in February ; brother Cain, 1st in October ; brother Ward, 1st in January ; and Elder Jackson, 1st in July.—By request from *Canaan*—Elder Case, 4th Lord's day in January ; brother Young 2d in February ; & Elder Jackson 1st in May.

15. Chose brother Young to superintend printing the minutes.

16. Voted to hold our association the next year at Readfield, the third Wednesday in August, at 1 o'clock P. M.



C I R C U L A R L E T T E R.

Beloved Fellow-Travelers,

IN our two last, we have given you some specimens of the grounds of christian fellowship, and of some duties incumbent on christians. We will now attempt to set forth some of the *benevolent* effects, which will discover themselves where such fellowship prevails, and such duties are practised.

By *benevolence*, we understand that temper of mind, that is disposed to view all things according to their own merit, or worth—acts above self, and to the honor and glory of God : And is the spring or source from whence all right exercises must flow ; and no performance, without it flows from this principle, is worth the name of a duty. But when the soul is governed by it, salutary effects will appear, whether the person governed by it acts in public or private capacity—Whether as a preacher or hearer. Inspired with this, the preacher goes forth facing a frowning world, although reproached and scoffed at, and the blessed truths he delivers, ridiculed and rejected ; yet he feels his soul in pursuit of the happiness of theirs, and his own life would not be dear to him, if he could but win their souls to Christ.

Governed by *this*, every ambassador of Christ will endeavour to accommodate himself to the lowest capacity, and interest himself in the most intricate case of his hearers: And aiming at their good can say with Paul "I seek not yours but you."

And although they are conscious of the gospel rite, "that they that preach the gospel, should live of the gospel;" yet they count it even a reward to preach the gospel without charge; 1 Cor 14.—18. Desirous that it should have free course and be glorified, they are willing to undergo many straits and difficulties in dispensing of it. To spend and be spent in the cause of God will be the delight of those, that are governed by a spirit of true *benevolence*.

How far from such a spirit are those whose narrow aims are governed by supreme love to SELF, instead of the glory of God! Who profess much love to their hearers, yet appear by their conduct, to love their property, rather than their soul's eternal welfare! But, "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you—although we thus speak."

On the other hand; will not benevolence have its practical effects on hearers as well as preachers? But how will it appear, barely in their going to hear sermons, or rather in their attention to the word, desirous to know "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," and to do it? When it prevails, will it not be perceivable in every department of life? Will not *husbands* governed by *this* exhibit due benevolence towards their wives; and *wives* see that they reverence their husbands? Will not *masters* use suitable compassion towards their servants; and *servants* yield due obedience to their masters? Is not benevolence the most powerful source of parental affection? Is not *this* sufficient to prompt them to study their children's best good; endeavouring to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" And what spirit can children have, that will make them more dutiful (where they have been taught it) than a benevolent one? Is there any principle from which a people can act, that will make them live more agreeable in neighbourhood & society than *benevolence*? Conscious of their own imperfections, will not they use suitable compassion towards others (when dealing with them about their failings) not willing to expose their weakness, when they have reason to hope their aim is right? Again, is there any beauty, or happiness, among hearers as a parish or society, where they are not governed by a *benevolent spirit*? Is not their beauty and happiness radically contained in it? Can the gospel ministry be supported in a society in peace and

unity, where they are not governed by such a principle? Is not the want of *this*, the very grounds of *bearers'* looking so much one upon another (respecting supporting the ministry) rather than freely acting their own part, in communicating such things as God has given them? Will those that are governed by a *benevolent* spirit, study every semi-want of their own; consulting the best measures to secure their own property, before doing any thing towards encouraging, and supporting the gospel ministry? Can *bearers* be governed by a spirit of benevolence, and not compassionate the cause of their preachers, making of it their own—and as really rejoice in relieving their wants, as in seeing their beautiful feet upon the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace? In short, will not every *benevolent* soul, love to do good to all, especially the household of faith? How different from this *benevolence* is the conduct of those, whose religion consists in hearing more than obeying—who rule with authority—govern stowardly—and discipline with cruelty? Or those, who instead of seeking the good of each other, are studying their own; also making the worst of every one's failings but their own? How different from the *benevolence* that has been described, are the feelings and conduct of those, who never feel willing to relieve the poor and needy, or to succour God's ministers unless driven to it by the lashes of conscience or fear of falling under the censure of those from whom they cannot hide their selfishness? But brethren, we hope your deportment will ever be such that we may have good grounds to hope for better things from you—and things that accompany salvation! Brethren, if what has been suggested be consonant with *benevolence* (and they that are otherwise cannot be hid) how ought we to compare our lives and conduct with the word of God? And let conscience do its office if we are found wanting!

To profess *benevolence* and be a stranger to its effects will be no more benefit to our souls (in a dying hour) than it would benefit a destitute brother to say to him, be you fed and cloathed, yet give him nothing. Happy the person whether preacher or hearer, that upon examination can find the witness in himself, that real *benevolence* is the leading principle of his soul! And is daily bewailing before God the remains of SELF that is yet unconquered by BENEVOLENCE!

Signed in behalf of the Association,

WILLIAM STINSON, *Moderator.*
ELISHA WILLIAMS, *Clerk.*