

S33940

Baptists. Maine. Bowdoinham Association, 1815.
Minutes ... Held in Bowdoin, September 27th &
28th, 1815.

Hallowell, [Me.], Cheever, 1815. 8 pp.
MWA copy.

BEST COPY
AVAILABLE

MINUTES

OF THE

BOWDOINHAM ASSOCIATION,

HELD IN

Bowdoin,

SEPTEMBER 27th & 28th,

1815.



HALLOWELL :

PRINTED BY N. CHEEVER.

1815.

MINUTES, &c.

WEDNESDAY, September 27.

AT ten o'clock, A. M. brother Daniel Merrill preached the introductory sermon, from Luke viii. 1. *And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village preaching, and shewing the glad tidings of the KINGDOM OF GOD.*

Chose brother Robert Low, Moderator, and brother Thomas Francis, Clerk.

After prayer, read the letters from the several churches, and took the following account of members added, dismissed, excluded, and died the year past, and the present number in each church.

N. B. The names of ordained ministers are in SMALL CAPITALS; licenced preachers in *italic*. The ministers names with this * mark, were not present; churches marked thus † we had no information from this session; vacant churches distinguished by a —.

Churches.	Elders & Messengers.	Added.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Died.	Total.
1st Bowdoin,	JOSEPH DENSLOW, David Buker, Nathaniel Purrington,	75	1		2	151
1st Sidney,	*ASA WILBER, Thomas S. Farrington, Seneca Stanley, William Lewis,				1	57
1st Litchfield,	HENRY KENDALL, Joshua Weymouth,	7	2	7	2	177
Lewistown,	BENJAMIN COLE, Jacob Golder, Joel Morse,		1	1	1	56
Readfield,	ISAAC CASE, JOSEPH PALMER, William Richards, William Taylor,		3		2	91
Fayette,	*OLIVER BILLINGS, Abijah Crane, Joseph Watson,	1	4	2	2	102
Greene,	JOHN DAGGETT, JR. Jesse Coburn, Lemuel Comins, Martin Leonard,	3		1	4	94

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders & Messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Wayne,	<u>Nathan Thomas,</u>	2			1	17
1st Lisbon,	<u>Daniel Pearce,</u> Stephen Dodd, Elijah Jones,	2	2			29
Clinton,	<u>MEPHIBOSHETH CAIN,</u> Joseph Spearin,	2				47
†New Vineyard Wales,	<u>JAMES PIERCE,</u> Philip Jenkins, David Jenkins,		4	2		51 44
Mount Vernon,	<u>PETER MOORE,</u> John Hovey, Nathaniel Rice, Robert Lambert,	4	1	1		68
Leeds,	<u>THOMAS FRANCIS,</u> Giddins Lane, Ebenezer Mason,	2				50
New Sharon,	<u>Benjamin Smith,</u>		1	1	1	55
Bloomfield,	<u>Daniel Smith,</u> Thomas Steward, Joseph Emery,	2	2	4		68
2d Sidney,	<u>Asa Williams,</u> John Lancaster, Benjamin Dyer,			2	1	28
2d Bowdoin,	<u>ICHABOD TEMPLE,</u> Nathaniel Smith, Samuel T. Mallet, Winslow Staples, Samuel Smith,	58	3	2	1	129
Belgrade,	<u>ELIAS TAYLOR,</u> Shadrach Rollins, Ebenezer Carlton,	2	1	2		50
Hallowell,	<u>JOHN ROBINSON,</u> James Hinkley, Joel Clark,				1	43
2d Lisbon,	<u>William Jordan,</u> John Ross,		3		1	18
Cornville,	<u>Isaac Bridges,</u>		1	1		41
Harmony,	<u>Samuel Doore,</u>	3				36
Farmington,	<u>Otis Briggs,</u> ELIAS NELSON, Joshua Smith, David Woodcock, Samuel Shaw,	4	2			26
Monmouth,		5	1			23

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders & Messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
†Palmyra,	_____					8
New Portland,	_____			7	2	15
2d Litchfield,	Abraham Cleaves, WILLIAM STINSON, Andrew Blake, Samuel Blanchard, Benjamin Shaw, Jr.	3		2		47
3d Livermore,	THOMAS WYMAN,				1	36
Bowdoinham,	DANIEL PIERSON, Uriel Huntington, Hezekiah Purrington,	6	1	1		63
Canaan,	_____	3	2		1	37
No. Five,	Eliakim Ames, AMAZIAH REED, Philip Judkins,	1		2		60
Bakerstown,	_____	6		1		22
† Philips,	_____					14
† 2d Mount Vernon,	_____					8
Topsham,	ELIHU PURRINGTON, Elijah White, James Cook,					11
		188	35	39	24	1867

The last mentioned Church was added at this session.

Called for the messengers and minutes from Corresponding Associations, and received as follows :

<i>Associations.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>
Warren,	Letter and Minutes.
New Hampshire,	Letter and Minutes.
Lincoln,	Letter & Minutes. Phinehas Pilsbury.
Cumberland,	Letter and Minutes. Ransom Norton.
Nova Scotia & N. Brunswick,	
Letter and Minutes.	David Harris.

Appointed brethren Huntington and Briggs, to apportion the expense for printing the minutes, &c. among the several churches.

The following question, from the second church in Sidney, was referred to Messrs. Merrill, Harris, Titcomb, Pilsbury and Briggs, to consider the same and report thereon, viz. "Is it agreeable to apostolic order, and for the peace, harmony and union of churches, for one church to receive a member, who is excluded from another church of the same faith and order, until it is made

evident, that the church excluding, is corrupt in discipline and struck out of the fellowship of the associated body?"

The Committee, to whom at the last annual meeting was referred the following question from the church at New Vineyard, viz. "Is it gospel, that a private brother assist in ordaining an Elder, such as to pray at the laying on of hands, or to give the right hand of fellowship?" &c. reported as follows: 1st. The question is proposed in so loose and undefined a manner, as not to admit of a prompt and definite answer.—2d. The ordaining of an Elder, or setting apart of one to the work of the gospel ministry, is a transaction so *solemn* in its nature, and so *important* in its consequences; that it would be highly improper for a church, belonging to this Association, to proceed in the business, without the concurrence of a suitable number of sister churches, furnished with Elders, whom, among other things, have received the solemn charge; '*Lay hands suddenly on no man.*'

Voted to accept the foregoing Report.

The Circular Letter, prepared by brother Low, and the Corresponding Letter, by brother Francis, were read and accepted.

Adjourned until nine o'clock tomorrow morning. Brother Boardman concluded by prayer. Preaching in several parts of the town in the evening.

Thursday morning, 9 o'clock.—Met agreeably to adjournment. Introductory prayer by brother Daggett.

Appointed brethren Hovey and Palmer, to settle with the Treasurer.

Chose brother William Richards, Treasurer.

Appointed the following messengers to corresponding Associations, viz. To the New Hampshire, brother E. Taylor, in case of failure, brother Palmer. To the Lincoln, brother Cain, in case of failure, brother Cole. To the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, brother Case. To the Cumberland, brethren Francis and Daggett.

Voted to recommend that the first day of the next year, and the first Tuesday in each succeeding quarter, be observed as days of fasting and prayer.

The Committee, to whom was referred the question, from the second church in Sidney, reported, that they concur with the Cumberland Association in saying, "Each church is independent with respect to discipline." And that "An Association of churches have no power to abrogate the censure of an individual church," and therefore all questions and difficulties between churches and excluded members, are to be decided by councils of ministers and churches, appointed by the consent of parties ; and therefore a second church may receive an excluded member, by the advice of a council so called, if the church excluding, refuses to receive such a member, at the advice of such council.

Voted to accept the foregoing Report.

Appointed brother Briggs to prepare the Circular, and brother Kendall the Corresponding Letter for next year.

Appointed brother Wm. Richards to receive the money contributed to aid the designs of the Baptist Board for Foreign Missions.

Voted to continue brethren Low, Francis, and Daggett, a Committee on the subject of Foreign Missions.

Appointed br. Francis, Secretary of the Association.

Voted that the Secretary provide a suitable book for his use, at the expense of the Association.

Voted that the Association be holden next year at the Baptist Meeting house in Readfield ; on the fourth Wednesday in September, at ten o'clock, A. M.

On the motion, to see if a person be appointed to preach the introductory sermon,

Voted in the negative.

Appointed brother Francis, to superintend the printing of the minutes.

The committee appointed to settle with the Treasurer, reported that there was twenty eight dollars in the treasury.

Received for Missionary purposes, as follows, viz.

<i>Home mission.</i>		<i>Foreign mission.</i>	
By contribution,	\$33 47		\$32 22
From Fem. Mite Society, Readfield,	} 19 09		

At one o'clock, the usual business being finished, the

Moderator addressed the meeting in a solemn and impressive manner, and concluded by prayer.

Sermon in the afternoon by brother Harris, from N. Brunswick.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The BOWDOINHAM ASSOCIATION, to the Churches of Christ which we represent, wishing grace, mercy and peace, may be multiplied among you.

BELOVED IN THE LORD,

WHILST some express their fears, that the Baptist Associations may in time, infringe on the internal rights of the churches, and so destroy their *independence*, by exercising too much authority over them; we have thought proper to call your attention to the subject.

Associations are *christian conferences*, composed of delegates from the churches they represent, and are formed for the purpose of providing for the general union of the churches, preserving a chain of communion among them—giving advice in matters of difficulty—promoting the order, peace and joy, of the churches.—Associations have power to adopt rules of decorum—to admit churches into fellowship—to inquire into the cause why churches, who have been admitted, fail to represent themselves in the Association?—and to withdraw from any church, which shall violate the rules of the Association, ~~and~~ depart from the orthodox principles of religion; ~~but~~ have no power to *lord it over God's heritage*.—Associations thus organized, strengthen our union, revive our spirits, diffuse christian knowledge, and by information received from the churches, we are led to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep.

Beloved, this is a trying day. Errors greatly abound. The doctrine of grace, (too humiliating for the reception of the unrenewed heart) is assaulted by all the cunning craftiness, which the enemies of truth can bring forward. Let us therefore hold fast the possession of our faith without wavering, and not be children “tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.” As christians, you are experimentally taught the doctrine of total moral depravity—you know that in your “flesh dwells no good thing.” That you are saved by free grace. That you have chosen God for your portion, because he first chose you.

A few remarks on the divine decrees for the establishment of the wavering, shall close our epistle.

The divine decrees are the determinations and purposes of God, who worketh all things according to his own will. Three things were absolutely necessary in order to the prediction of future events. 1st. The determination of God. 2d. A revelation of the decree to the Prophet. 3d. A commission to publish it. Upon this foundation rests the accomplishment of all future events which have been foretold by the prophets. Therefore brethren, if God has not decreed the certain salvation of every regenerate soul, not one, this

side heaven, can say, "We know if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" but all is awful uncertainty.—Must we then launch into eternity in this dark state of mind? No, for he hath given us an *earnest* of the heavenly inheritance! Let us therefore go on our way rejoicing, and manifest our love to our divine Lord and Redeemer, by keeping his commandments. Let us love one another, and pray one for another; and may the consoling influences of the divine Spirit be with you all. AMEN.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The BOWDOINHAM ASSOCIATION, convened at Bowdoin, September 27 and 28, 1815, to Corresponding Associations—Grace be to you, &c.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

It is with *peculiar* sensations of gratitude to God, we at this time engage in our epistolary correspondence. Through the blessing of returning peace, we are once more at liberty to communicate our friendship, and relate the state of our churches, not only to correspondents within the limits of our own territory, but also to our beloved brethren in the neighboring provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, with whom also, we have walked in company to the house of God, and there taken sweet council together. For this, bless the Lord, O our souls! and all that is within us, bless his holy name!

Many circumstances conspire to interrupt the happiness of the saints, in their journey through this vale of tears; but blessed be God, nothing shall finally separate them from His love, nor can anything cause them wholly to forget Zion.

Rest assured, dear brethren, that our attachment to the precious truths and ordinances of Christ, remain unshaken, notwithstanding our present conflicts with the world, the flesh and satan. Yea, to Him, who loved us, who gave Himself for us, who hath redeemed His people, by His blood, out of every nation, &c. we desire to be devoted and to manifest our fidelity unto Him, and our faith in Him, by patiently waiting the accomplishment of His gracious promises, and by loving our brethren as He hath given us commandment.

Our churches (generally) are in a low state. Some "mercy drops," have nevertheless fallen upon this part of God's Zion. Our present meeting has been profitable. We have been led to anticipate and *long* for that blessed day, when "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads! when sorrow and sighing shall *forever* flee away." Your messengers and minutes have been received with pleasure; and it is our earnest desire, that a mutual correspondence may be uninterruptedly continued, till we arrive at that state of perfect holiness, and endless joy, where we shall see, as we are seen, and know, as we are known.—AMEN.

ROBERT LOW, *Moderator.*

THOMAS FRANCIS, *Clerk.*