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**Baptists. South Carolina. Charleston Association, 1775.**

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# M I N U T E S

## O F T H E

### C H A R L E S T O W N A S S O C I A T I O N .

Recd. April 6. 1775

CHARLESTOWN, FEB. 6. 1775.

AT Ten o'Clock, A. M. Rev. Oliver Hart, agreeable to Appointment, opened the Association with a suitable Discourse from Hag. ii. 4. *Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord, and be strong, O Joshua, Son of Josedeck the high Priest, and be strong all ye People of the Land, saith the Lord, and work: For I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

2. Letters from five Churches were read, and the Names enrolled, as follows.

Note, *The Churches marked with \* sent neither Messengers nor Letters, and the Messengers marked † did not attend.*

Churches.	Messengers.	Baptizd.	Add. by L.	Dead.	Dismissed.	Excom.	Numbers.
CHARLESTOWN,	{ Rev. Oliver Hart, Rev. Edmund Matthews, Mr. Patrick Hinds, Mr. Thomas Rivers, Mr. David Williams.	3					74
EWRAW,	{ Mr. Joseph Grimbball, Mr. Joseph Smith, † Mr. Josiah Hart. †	5		4			67
ASHLEY-RIVER, *							44
WELCH-NECK,	Mr. Abel Wilds.	10	1	1	2		58
CATFISH, *							42
LYNCH'S-CREEK, *	Rev. Jephtha Vining. †						24
CASHAWAY, *	Rev. Evan Pugh. †						60
COOSAWHATCHEE,	{ Rev. James Smart, † Rev. Joshua Lewis, Mr. Thomas Knight, Mr. Joshua Looper.	42	6	5		3	97
NEW-SAVANNA,	{ Rev. Edmund Botsford, † Mr. James Brewer.	12	5				68
		72	12	10	2	3	579

3. Chose Rev. Mr. Oliver Hart Moderator, and Mr. David Williams Clerk.

4. Received Letters from three Sister Associations, viz. The WARREN, PHILADELPHIAN, and that held at FAIR-FORREST. Rev. Philip Mulkey, appointed Messenger from Fair-Forrest, was received.

5. Rev. Messrs. Elhanan Winchester, Joseph Rees and Thomas Norris being present, their Company and Assistance was desired.

6. Took into Consideration the Letter from Fair-Forrest, and are well pleased with the Proposal, made by their Messenger, for uniting the several Associations in this Province into one, as believing it would tend to the Interest of the Churches in general; and resolved to promote it.

7. Appointed Rev. Elhanan Winchester, to prepare an Answer to the Letter from FAIR-FORREST, and a Letter to the KETOCTON Associations: Rev. Edmund Matthews, to prepare Letters to those of WARREN and PHILADELPHIA; and the Rev. Oliver Hart to prepare the Circular Letter to the Churches: Also Rev. Oliver Hart and Messrs. Abel Wilds and David Williams, to be our Messengers to the Association, to be held at the High-Hills of Santee, the second Saturday in May next; and the Rev. Elhanan Winchester, to those of Warren and Philadelphia.

8. Queries from the Church at Coolawhatchee, viz.

1. How is a Candidate for the Ministry to be ordained?

*Ans.* A Person to be ordained to the Work of the Gospel-Ministry, must be called thereto, by the Voice of the Church to which he belongs, and set apart by Prayer, Fasting, and laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, (two or more Ministers of the same Faith and Order) 1 Tim. 4. 14. who then give him the Right Hand of Fellowship. See Summary of Church Discipline, Ch. II. § 1.

2. In what Manner is a Gospel-Church to be constituted; and how does a Minister take the pastoral Charge thereof?

*Ans.* A Gospel-Church is constituted by the mutual Consent of the Parties concerned; who being satisfied with each others Graces and Experience, and thus united in the Bond of Love, give themselves up to the Lord, and to one another by the Will of God, 2 Cor. 8. 5. by subscribing a written Covenant, Isa. 44. 5. whereby they bind and oblige themselves to be the Lord's, and to walk in all his Commands and Ordinances blameless. And we advise, that a Minister or Ministers, should be called to their Assistance. See Summary of Church-Discipline, Ch. I. § 3. And a Minister becomes Pastor of the Church, by accepting their unanimous Call to that Office.

9. A Letter from Rev. James Smart, stating the Circumstances of a late Ordination at Coosawhatchee, was attended to, which being fully considered, the Association are agreed, that though there were several Irregularities committed, yet as the Essentials of Ordination were used, it is valid

10. In Answer to a Letter from a Branch of Coosawhatchee-Church, we are of Opinion, that if agreeable to the Church, the said Branch may be constituted a distinct Church.

11. Agreed to recommend to our Churches, to contribute to the Relief of our Brethren, suffering under Ecclesiastical Oppressions, in the *Massachusetts-Bay*. And that the Money raised be sent to the Rev. Oliver Hart, to be by him remitted to Rev. Isaac Bachus, for that Purpose.

12. We recommend to our Churches, to keep three Days of Fasting and Prayer this Year; to humble ourselves before Almighty God for our Sins, to supplicate his Mercies, and to deprecate the Judgments which we have justly deserved; and which from the present alarming Circumstances of Affairs, appear to be hanging over us; namely, the Friday before the fourth Lord's Day in this Month, and the Friday before the last Lord's Day in May and August next.

13. This Association taking into Consideration, the usual Time of their Meeting, as being inconvenient to some of the Churches, agree, that for sundry Reasons, no other Season would be more convenient; but especially as a Messenger from the Northward, in the present *Arrangement*, may attend all the BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS on the Continent, except that at *Ketothen*.

14. Concluded, that next Association be held in Charlestown, on Monday after the first Lord's Day in February next; that Rev. Evan Pugh preach the Sermon, and in case of Failure Rev. Oliver Hart.

*N. B.* The Subscribers for the *Confession of Faith and Summary of Church-Discipline*, may apply to Rev. Oliver Hart.

*The Association of Ministers and Brethren, Delegates of several baptized Churches, held in Charlestown, February 6th, 7th and 8th, 1775; to the several Churches they represent,*

SEND CHRISTIAN SALUTATION.

*Beloved in the Lord,*

**T**HROUGH the Goodness of God we have met in Peace, and attended to the Business which came before us in Love, Unanimity, and we hope, with some Degree of Zeal. We trust  
God

God has been with us, comforting our Hearts and strengthening our Hands for his Service. What has been done, our Minutes will shew. Permit us to lay before you a few necessary Things; and may God make them of Use to your Souls. *First*, Be careful to maintain the Life and Power of Godliness in your Souls; in order to which, keep close to God in Prayer; the Neglect of which tends to Coldness in Religion, and renders the Soul more unfit for Communion with God. *Secondly*, Maintain the Worship of God in your Families; pray with and for them, instruct them in the Principles of Religion, and enforce your Precepts by the best Examples. *Thirdly*, Keep your Places in the House of God, and neglect not the assembling of your selves together, as the Manner of some is; but keep close to the Ordinances of God's House; attend to all publick and private Meetings of the Church to which you belong. *Fourthly*, Strengthen the Hands of our Ministers; pray earnestly for them, pay them that Respect which is due to their sacred Function, provide for them and their Families a comfortable Support, that so being freed from the Cares of this Life, they may attend to Prayer, the Ministry of the Word, and all the other Duties of their Office. *Fifthly*, Guard against Error, Heresy and every Species of corrupt Doctrine; labour that you may be sound in the Doctrines of Grace, and that you may feel their vital Influence on your Hearts. Contend earnestly for the Faith, once delivered to the Saints. *Sixthly*, Discountenance all disorderly Presumers on the Ministry; encourage none but such as have proper Credentials. *Seventhly*, Encourage gifted Brethren; and pray the Lord of the Harvest to send forth more Labourers into his Harvest. *Eighthly*, Maintain good Order and strict Discipline in your Churches; a Summary of Church-Discipline is just printed, which may help you in this Respect. *Finally*, Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Yours in Gospel Bonds,

OLIVER HART, *Moderator.*  
DAVID WILLIAMS, *Clerk.*

Charlestown, South-Carolina,  
February 8th, 1775.