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Baptists. South Carolina. Charleston Association, 1801.
Minutes.... October 31st ... to the 3d of November,
1801.

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M I N U T E S

O F T H E

CHARLESTON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

Convened in AMELIA-TOWNSHIP, South-Carolina, October 21st, and continued to the 3^d of November, 1801.

1. **T**HE two first days, as usual, were employed in the exercises of public worship: Two sermons were delivered on Saturday, and three on the Sabbath; the services of the latter concluding with the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

2. On Monday, at 11 o'clock A. M. the Association Sermon was delivered by Rev. Joseph B. Cook, from Amos vii. 2, "By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?"

3. Letters from eighteen churches were received and read, and the names of their delegates enrolled;

4. Chose Rev. Dr. Farman, moderator, and Rev. Joseph B. Cook, clerk; and invited regular ministering brethren present to a seat with the delegates.

5. The church at Wafferslaw applied by a letter and their delegates, Robert Thornley, esq. and Mr. Thomas Blackman, for admission to membership in this association. Satisfactory information respecting their faith and order being received, they were cheerfully admitted. This church has been constituted about seventeen years, and a great part of the time had the late Rev. Ralph Bowman for their pastor.

6. Received minutes of the Philadelphia and Warren Associations of the last year, and a letter from the former of the present year; also, letters from the Bethel, Hephzibah and Sandy Creek Associations. Rev. Davis Collins attended as messenger from the Bethel, and Mr. Edmund Talbot from the Hephzibah, who were cordially received.

7. Appointed the following brethren messengers to neighbouring associations: L. Collins and W. Jones to the Bethel, Roberts to the Georgia, and M'Cullers to the Hephzibah. Also appointed the following brethren to write to the associations corresponding with us: Roberts to the Philadelphia, Cook to the Warren, Woods to the Bethel, D. Collins to the Hephzibah, Nixon to the Georgia, M'Cullers to the Sandy-Creek, and Dubose to the Neuse.

8. Agreed to petition the legislature of this state for a revision and amelioration of the law passed at their last session, which imposes restrictions on meetings for religious instruction and public worship, so far as they respect people of colour. Appointed the Moderator to prepare the petition.

9. The church on Rockey River having expressed in their letter, a desire to be dismissed from this association, and some weighty reasons being assigned for not agreeing to it, at least until the said church should be informed of them; Mr. Woods was appointed to write to them on the subject.

10. The delegates of the Congaree Church having represented, that a difficulty existed among them respecting a person in their membership, who had been licensed to preach, but whose character was considered in so unfavourable a light by the other churches, particularly by those in the Bethel Association, that they would not admit him to preach among them, and that the church wished the assistance of the association on the subject; therefore, brethren

brethren Furman, L. Collins and Roberts, were appointed a committee to collect information, consider and report on the case.

11. Letters from the church in Anson, and that at the Upper Fork of Lynch's-creek, were received, in favour of a person who had been excommunicated by the church at the Beauty Spot, and against whom, as a preacher, the public had been cautioned by the association on a former occasion, on account of the high charges brought against him; but who is said to have been reconciled to the church which excluded him, and to be now a member of the church at Lynch's creek. The case was accordingly taken into consideration; but as it appeared, on enquiry, that there was reason to fear the church at the Beauty Spot had not been sufficiently attentive to the nature of the case, in their act of restoring said person to their fellowship; and, as many members of the association were not satisfied with the transaction; it was agreed to request the said church to reconsider the case, and Rev. Messrs. Frame Woods and Robert Thomas were appointed to attend at the same time, as assistants, on behalf of the association.

12. One of the members of the committee appointed last year to visit the Bethel church, reported, that the committee had been so disappointed as never to be able to attend regularly to the business of their appointment; but that it was certain a regular state of things had not taken place in said church. The association are sorry the causes of uneasiness are not removed; but agree to leave the matter, at present, to the direction of Divine Providence, hoping that the private labours of visiting ministers may in time be blessed, to bring about that regularity and harmony among them which are so much to be desired.

13. The committee to whom was committed the business respecting the Congaree church, reported by their chairman, that they find the subject of their enquiry very serious and distressing, and recommend that the association appoint some of their ministering brethren to assist said church in bringing the business to a regular issue. This report was concurred in, and Rev. Messrs. Lewis Collins and John M. Roberts were appointed.

14. Query, from the church in Anson: Is it agreeable to gospel order that a person should enjoy special church privileges in neighbouring churches, who has received a letter of dismission from the church of which he is a member, but refuses to give it up to another, in the bounds of which he resides? Answer—No; provided he has fixed his residence, and the church he resides among are in regular gospel order.

15. Query, from the church at Ebenezer: What is the most advisable method for a church to proceed in respecting a member who has been received among them from another church, in the capacity of a licensed preacher, when a part of their own members do not approve of his qualifications, nor think it proper for him to preach? Answer—The first measure should be by candid means to attempt giving satisfaction to the dissatisfied members; but if this desirable end is not so obtained, the church must, in their decision, abide by the voice of the majority.

16. As a Mr. Evan Jones has been, on a former occasion, noticed as a minister in friendly connection with us; the association think it their duty to inform the public that he is not in their fellowship at present. The unfavorable

favorable accounts they have received of his character and conduct, from good authority, form the reasons of this publication.

17. Read and approved the Circular Letter prepared by Mr. Roberts; also the letters to corresponding associations, as prepared by the persons appointed.

18. The Moderator produced the petition to the legislature he was requested to prepare; which was read, approved and signed.

19. Appointed Rev. Mr. Botsford to write the Circular Letter for the next year, on this question: By what conduct are the members of churches most likely to strengthen the hands of their ministers, and co-operate with them in promoting the interests of vital religion? Also appointed Mr. Botsford to correspond with the Committee of the Philadelphia Association, on the subject of the proposed general conference.

20. Agreed that the next meeting of the association be at the High Hills of Santee, on the Saturday before the first Sabbath in November, 1802. Mr. Woods to preach the sermon, in case of failure, Mr. L. Collins.

21. Collected the money for printing the minutes; the superintendance of printing and the distribution of them, were committed to the Moderator.

Concluded with exhortation and prayer, in the usual manner.

N. B. The days appointed for special prayer for the revival of religion and the spreading of the gospel, are the first Tuesdays of January, April, July and October.

MINUTES of the GENERAL COMMITTEE.

1. THE following persons appeared as delegates—Richard Furman, Joseph B. Cook, Frame Woods, John M. Roberts and Lewis Collins.

2. Re-elected Dr. Furman, president; col. Screven, treasurer; Rev. John M. Roberts, secretary; and Messrs. T. Rivers and H. Ingleby, assistants.

3. The president informed the committee that Mr. Morton had attended, the special committee, and been admitted by them to partake of the benefit of the fund; and was then attending Mr. Roberts's academy as a student.

4. Agreed that the powers vested in the Special Committee, the last and some former years, be continued to them this year.

5. Took account of the collections made this year by the churches, and of the state of the fund; when it appeared that Charleston had contributed 59l. 6s. 5d. (paid into the hands of the treasurer); Euhaw, 33l. 2s. 2d.; Welch Neck, 5l. 17s. 6d.; High Hills of Santee, 10l.; Georgetown, 12l.; Congaree, 18s. 8d.; Swift Creek, 9s. 4d.; Major Thornley, as an individual, 14s.; amounting to 122l. 8s. 1d. Money and specialies in the hands of the treasurer, as per his account rendered, 495l. 6s. 9d. Of monies retained in the hands of the president, not included in the treasurer's account, 29l. 14s. 8d. Expenditure (monies paid by the president) to be deducted, 65l. 46s. 9d. Remains in the fund, 522l. 7s. 2d.

RICHARD FURMAN, *President.*

JOHN M. ROBERTS, *Secretary.*

STATE of the CHURCHES.

The Ministers names are in capitals; Licensed Preachers in Italics; Churches distinguished with an asterisk (*) we had no account from, their numbers stand as they did the last year; Pastors and Messengers, to whose names and obelisk (†) is affixed, were absent; a dash (—) denotes a vacancy.

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Rev. by L.	Dismissed	Excommunic.	Rebored.	Dead.	Total.		
Charleston,	RICHARD FURMAN.	6	2	3	2		4	269		
Euhaw,	JOSEPH B. COOK,	32		7			4	172		
Welch Neck,	FRAME WOODS, James Brown,	1	2	16				120		
Mount Pleasant,*	EVAN PUGH,†							12		
Coosawhatchie,	{ AARON TISON,† Moses Spivey,	1	1		1		2	58		
	{ John Yeomans,							46		
Pipe Creek,*	—, Mat. McCullers, S. Morgan,		1	3		1	1	48		
Ebenezer,	JOHN M. ROBERTS, Amos Dubose,	7					2	99		
High Hills of Santee,	—,							11		
Lynch's Creek,*	JOSHUA LEWIS,†							88		
Cheraw Hill,*	{ WILLIAM BENNETT, Daniel									
Beauty Spot,	{ Lamoden,	4			1			74		
Bethel, Black River,*	—,							77		
Black Swamp,	ALEXANDER SCOTT,†							55		
Little Saltcatcher,*	—,							96		
Upper F. Lynch's Creek,*	—, Richard Holley,	6	2		2		2	108		
Swift Creek,	LEWIS COLLINS, Cason Scott,		1	5	1		2	38		
Lower F. Lynch's Creek,*	—,							68		
Rockey River,	—, George Whitley,	4		94	8		2	34		
Anson County, N. C.	CHARLES COOK,† G. Lawrence					1	2	47		
Great Saltcatcher,*	—,							26		
Deep Creek,	JEREMIAH LEWIS,†							53		
Little Peedee,*	—,							26		
Enon,*	—,							16		
Georgetown,	EDMUND BOTSFORD,†	1					4	31		
Gap Way,*	DAVID OWEN,†							26		
Bethesda,*	JAMES SWEAT,†							39		
Lane's Creek,*	JOHN CATO,†							24		
Congaree,	{ —, RALPH JONES,† John									
	{ Morrow, Thomas Williams,	12						110		
Lower Three Runs,	{ —, Thomas Matthews, Robert									
	{ Bradley, esq.	1	3			1		19		
Black Creek,	JAMES COLEMAN,† H. King,			2				21		
Three Creeks,	ROBERT THOMAS,†		1					25		
Wassersaw,	{ —, Robert Thornley, esquire,									
	{ Thomas Blackman,							20		
Decrease this year, 14.		Total,		75	13	130	17	2	25	1956

N. B. The Congaree Church appears much more numerous this year than heretofore, on account of a return made of the members which compose a distant branch of it, which was not obtained before.

Those dismissed from the Church at Rockey River, have been formed into other neighbouring churches.

The CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Charleston Baptist Association, met at Amelia Township, Orangeburgh District, the last day of October, 1801—To the Churches they represent, send Christian Salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN,

THE subject on which we address you in our Circular Letter, is important and interesting—"How may a person, who entertains serious doubts of his spiritual state, obtain satisfaction whether he is converted or not?" May the answer of this question confirm the faith and hope of the satisfied happy christian, remove the suspense and doubts of the spiritually dissatisfied, and awaken the unconverted to be wise unto salvation!

It is obvious that too many feel no solicitude or concern about their conversion and salvation—not enough even to raise doubts in their minds on the subject. They sleep in spiritual death. They cry peace, peace, when there is no peace—Such a state of carnal security and spiritual insensibility, is awfully dangerous; it is a dead calm, ominous of a tremendous storm.

Other persons, at particular seasons, have had partial convictions and awakenings of soul. The light of divine truth has shone upon their understandings, but the darkness there comprehended it not. The two-edged sword of conviction has pierced their hearts a little, but did not make wounds deep and alarming enough to make them apply to the physician of souls. Other persons possess a rash, groundless confidence of having experienced conversion, which is nearly allied to presumption. Self-assurance and vanity blind and infatuate their mind. These characters think themselves more righteous and sanctified than others; they can act the part of the boasting Pharisee.

But brethren, there are many honest hearted, pure spirited characters, whose minds are often involved in clouds of doubts concerning their conversion and regeneration. They go mourning and dejected through fear of not having experienced vital religion and evangelical conversion. To their own eyes their light seems so faint, their evidences so indistinct, their faith so weak, and their consolations so few, that gloomy doubts harass and distress their minds. Probably the following might be the language of a person in this condition—"Once I thought I had good grounds and sufficient reasons to believe that I was converted, that God had been gracious to my guilty soul, that my Saviour had pardoned my sins, that the Holy Ghost had changed and regenerated my heart, and brought it out of darkness into the marvellous light of salvation. Once I thought I had experienced these spiritual exercises and operations; but, alas! now I fear my conversion was imaginary; that my religion was like morning cloud and early dew. Now the spirit of faith, love and holy joy, seems to be almost entirely fled. My heart feels cold and hard, my affections feel frozen and lifeless: I doubt the good seed of divine truth was never sown in my heart, or its fruits would appear. I doubt my soul has never been illuminated with the Sun of Righteousness, or some rays of light would still shine. Doubts, fears and uncertainty, rob me of peace; make my days sad and my life bitter.

Have

Have not the devil and my own deceitful and desperately wicked heart, flattered me into a miserable delusion? Tormented with such doubts, distressed with such fears, how shall I disburden my heart of its melancholy load; how shall I dispel this dismal gloom; how shall I obtain satisfaction whether I have ever been converted or not?"

To obtain this desirable satisfaction, and come to a decision on the subject of his doubts, let such a person apply to the law and the testimony, to the gospel and its doctrines, and to the examples of christians recorded in the word of God. The marks and characteristics of converted and regenerated persons are so clearly and distinctly described in the sacred writings, that we may judge whether we have these marks and characteristic or not. Have we had a godly sorrow for sin? Have we repented in dust and ashes? Have we been convinced of its condemning power? Have we seen the grace, the glory, and the excellency of the gospel plan of salvation through Jesus Christ? Have we received and embraced our Saviour with penitent hearts and believing souls as the hope of glory, the way, the truth and the life? Have the scales of unbelief and spiritual darkness fallen from our eyes, and can we say, whereas once we were blind, now we see. Do we love the name, the word, the glory and worship of our Heavenly Father? Do we love our Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel? Do we love the Holy Ghost, the sanctifier and comforter? Do we love all who are of the household of faith, all true disciples of our Saviour and children of God? Do we live, by divine grace, soberly, righteously and godly? Are we humble, meek and patient? Are we charitable and benevolent to the poor and needy, the fatherless and friendless? Do we hate and abhor sin? Do we endeavour to avoid the least appearance of iniquity? Do we pray for grace, and make sacred resolutions to conquer and subdue its power and influence? Are our affections set on things above, and our treasures in heaven? Do we love and habitually practise public, private and family prayer? And when we have done all these things, do we call ourselves unprofitable servants, and ascribe all the glory and praise to God?

Are our lives and conduct proofs and evidences that we have experienced these spiritual operations and christian exercises of soul? If we have, tho' the clouds and thick darkness of doubts should sometimes be round about us, yet we have good grounds and sufficient reasons to believe that our souls have been converted; that we are new creatures, the disciples of Jesus, the children of God and the heirs of heaven. Such proofs and evidences should give us satisfaction and banish every melancholy doubt. Perhaps the most sanctified, devout and perfect christian is not entirely exempt from doubts at certain seasons; but the night will be short; the sun will soon rise with cheering and effulgent beams. Is it not necessary and proper, therefore, for those who entertain serious doubts of their spiritual state, to search the scriptures, to compare their experience, their hearts, their feelings, and their conduct, with the experience, the hearts and the conduct of converted persons recorded in the word of God. If there be a similarity and correspondence between them, may not satisfaction be obtained? Can there be a more satisfactory demonstration of our conversion and regeneration?

Let those then, who entertain serious doubts of their spiritual state, apply
to

to this test, and use these means to obtain a satisfactory decision. The scriptures are the sure and infallible criterion by which we are to judge. If our conversion be not correspondent with their dictates and their voice, it must be because there is no truth or reality in it. If it do correspond, we should feel satisfaction and consolations, rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great will be our reward in the kingdom of heaven. Let not doubts or anxiety be created in our minds when we feel a prevailing love to God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and when our conduct and conversation prove that we are perfecting holiness in fear of the Lord, and growing in the grace and knowledge of our Saviour. With these bright scriptural evidences we should be satisfied, and let the light of our religion through divine aid, shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. May God enable all professors of religion to make these evidences of their conversion shine conspicuously in their lives and conduct, and to his adorable name shall be ascribed all the praise and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

RICHARD FURMAN, *Moderator.*
JOSEPH B. COOK, *Clerk.*