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Baptists. Connecticut. Danbury Association, 1794.
Minutes ... at Suffield, Sept. 17th, and 18th, 1794.
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MINUTAE
OF THE
DANBURY BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION,
HOLDEN AT SUFFIELD,
SEPT. 17th, and 18th, 1794.

I. The Introductory Sermon was delivered by Elder CALVIN HULBERT, from Ephesians, ii. 8.

Elder SETH HIGBY was chosen Moderator; Elder STEPHEN ROYCE Clerk.

III. Letters from the several Churches were read, and the following List taken.

N. B. Ministers names in capitals; from Churches marked with a *, we received no Letters. Dashes denote no settled Minister.

CHURCHES.

MINISTERS, &c.

		Added.	Dismissed.	Excomm.	Died.	Number.
	{ JOHN HASTINGS,	2	—	2	1	106
SUFFIELD,	{ Ephraim Robins,					
	{ Judah Phelps,					
	{ Joshua Leavitt,					
	{ Daniel Better.					
	{					
WESTFIELD,	{ Israel Dewey,	—	—	—	—	85
	{ Jonathan Hays.					
	{					
1st DANBURY, †	DANIEL WILDMAN.	—	—	—	—	51
2d DANBURY,	{ Joseph Kellogg,	2	—	—	1	50
	{ Joseph Wadsworth,	—	—	—	—	29
CANAAN,	{ Joel Cows.					
	{					
1st WALLINGFORD,	{ Jeduthun Higby,	1	2	—	—	25
	{ John Hall.					
	{ ASHBEL HOSMER,	3	2	—	1	29
2d WALLINGFORD,	{ Caleb Todd.					
	{ CALVIN HULBERT,	—	—	1	1	44
	{ Ebenezer Hawley,					
	{ Daniel Griffith.					
	{ AMOS TUTTLE,	10	—	—	1	26
LITCHFIELD,	{ Joel Flumston,					
	{ Jonathan Woodworth.					
	{ STEPHEN ROYCE,	7	7	1	—	138
STRATFIELD,	{ Robert Wilson,					
	{ David Treadwell.					
	{					
TORRINGTON, †		—	—	—	—	50
ROXBURY,	{ Isaac Fuller.	3	8	—	—	32
	{	—	—	—	—	41
WARREN, †	ELIJAH WOOD.	1	—	—	1	23
AMENIA-TOWN,	{					
	{ Amos Brockitt,	—	—	—	—	23
	{ Adin Todd.					
	{ EPAPHRAS THOMPSON,	10	—	—	—	74
	{ John Lewis,					
	{ Zechariah Watson,					
	{ Aaron Merrill.					
NEW-HARTFORD,	{					
	{ Carried forward,					
		30	10	4	6	822

CHURCHES.

MINISTERS, &c.

Brought forward,	
NEW-MILFORD, †	
SHARON,	{ Hezekiah Carter, Ebenezer Hanchitt.
SIMSBURY,	{ Jared Mills
COLEBROOK,	— BABCOCK.
2d SANDSFIELD,	{ BENJAMIN BALDWIN, Jonah Bradley.
PAULINGSTOWN,	{ SETH HIGBY, Benjamin Allis.
EAST-HARTFORD,	{ STEPHEN SHEPARD, Daniel Swetland, Parmer Lad, Isaac Bellows.

Added.	Dismissed.	Excomm.	Died.	Number.
39	19	4	6	832
1	—	—	—	33
4	—	—	—	42
—	—	—	—	7
—	—	—	—	25
—	—	—	—	60
—	—	—	—	36
—	—	—	—	57
44	19	4	6	107

N. B. The Church, known by the name of The first Baptist Church in Waterbury, is now called The Baptist Church in Litchfield; likewise that called The Baptist Church in South-Britain, is called The Baptist Church in Roxbury: also, the four last mentioned Churches were cordially received into this Association, at our present Session.

Voted, That the Elders and Messengers present from other Associations, be invited to sit with us in council.

IVth. Received a letter and minutes from the Shaftsbury Association, by Elders Gray and Vining; also a letter and minutes from the New-York Association; likewise a letter and minutes from the Stonington, by Elder Rathbun and brother Gallup.

Vth. Elder Wildman, according to appointment, brought forward the Circular Letter, which was read and referred to a committee for revision.

VIth. Appointed Elder Hosmer to write to the Stonington, brother Robins to the New-York, and brother Mills to the Shaftsbury Associations.

Adjourned till 8 o'clock to-morrow morning.

THURSDAY, 8 o'Clock, A. M. Met, according to adjournment.

Meeting opened, and a sermon delivered by Elder Sam. Whelpley, from John i. 17

VII. The Circular Letter written by Elder Daniel Wildman, and examined by the committee, was by vote received.

VIII. Elder Hosmer's letter to the Stonington, brother Robins's to the New-York and brother Mills's to the Shaftsbury Associations, were read and approved.

IX. Appointed as messengers from this Association, Elders Thompson and Babcock to Stonington, Elders Higby and Baldwin to Shaftsbury, and Elders Wildman and Royce to New-York Associations.

- X. Appointed Elder Royce to write the Circular Letter for the ensuing Year.
- XI. Appointed Elder Hosmer to write our Corresponding Letter to the Shafisbury Association, Elder Wildman to the Stonington, and brother Robins to the New-York, against our next annual meeting.
- XII. Appointed Elder Wildman to superintend the printing of the Minutes.
- XIII. SUPPLIES for destitute CHURCHES.
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Simsbury, Brother Tuttle, | last Lord's Day in October, | |
| Hulbert, | 2d do. | May, |
| Hastings, | 2d do. | June, |
| Hosmer, | 2d do. | October, |
| Shepard, | 2d do. | December, |
| Thompson, | 2d do. | January, |
| Winchel, | 2d do. | February. |
| Watertown, Brother Tuttle, | 3rd do. | November, |
| Thompson, | 2d do. | do. |
| Hosmer, | 2d do. | December, |
| Shepard, | 1st do. | July. |
| Westfield, Brother Babcock, | 1st do. | June, |
| Baldwin, | 2d do. | February, |
| Baldwin, | 1st do. | July, |
| Shepard, | 1st do. | February, |
| Hastings, | 2d do. | November. |
| Roxbury, Brother Wildman, | 2d do. | October, |
| Tuttle, | 1st do. | January, |
| Thompson, | 1st do. | June, |
| Hosmer, | 2d do. | do. |
| Sharon, Brother Wood, | 1st do. | January, |
| Babcock, | last do. | February, |
| Higby, | last do. | May, |
| Tuttle, | 1st do. | do. |
| Hosmer, | 2d do. | August, |
| Hastings, | 1st do. | before Association. |
| Canaan, Brother Wood, | 1st do. | May, |
| Wood, | 1st do. | September. |
- XIV. Voted, That our next Association be holden at Dover, in Elder Higby's Meeting-House.
- XV. Appointed Elder Hastings to preach the Introductory Sermon ;—in case of failure, Elder Royce.
- XVI. We recommend it to the Churches in our connection, not to receive any man as a preacher of the Gospel, unless he is regularly recommended as a member in good standing, in some Church, and has the approbation of said Church as a Preacher.

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

The Elders, and Messengers which compose the Danbury Association, met in Suffield, Sept. 17th and 18th, to the Churches they represent, send Greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN.

IT hath pleased the great head of the Church, to permit us once more to meet at the time, and place appointed. And now at the close of our meeting, we rejoice that we are able to inform you, that we met together in peace, and that brotherly love and union have attended us, in all matters which came before us.

It affords us great pleasure, to hear by letters from our Churches, that harmony still prevails so generally among them, and that in some places, God is carrying on his work, and adding to the Church, such as shall be loved. For further particulars we refer you to our minutes.

And now brethren, since it becomes us as Christians, to manifest our allegiance to our Divine Sovereign, by keeping all his commandments, and following him in his examples, that we may declare his glory, engage others by our good works to do the same and enjoy the comforts of religion ourselves; permit us to call your attention particularly, to that important duty enjoined on us, in St. Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians, Chapt. 6, verse 18, *Praying always, with all prayer, and supplication in the spirit.*

That it is the duty of all men to pray, no one can deny who attends to the sacred oracles. But it is the peculiar privilege of God's people, as well as a duty they owe to him, to address him by prayer. To this end he declares that *his ears are open to the prayers of the righteous, and attentive to their cry.* From the exhortation we learn, that prayer is the duty of all christians; that they are constantly to practice it, that they are to ask for every thing they need, that they are to perform it in all appointed ways, so far as they have received the gift; and that it may be performed acceptably, it is to be done in godly sincerity through the assistance of the holy spirit.

We are taught in the scriptures to pray for all men, and religion doubtless leads us to desire the happiness of our fellow creatures, as well as of ourselves. From this divine direction, we have an unquestionable warrant to pray, not only for civil rulers, that we may be favored with the quiet and peaceable enjoyment of our rights, but also for the everlasting salvation of sinners. Our Savior has set us the example, by praying for his murderers. Stephen the martyr did the same; and Paul's earnest desire and prayer to God for Israel after the flesh was, that they might be saved: it is likewise said of Zion, that when *she travailed she brought forth her children*; and we may expect that God will still carry on his work in this way.

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We are likewise abundantly taught to pray for the church of God ; the word of truth directs us to pray one for another, Jesus prayed in particular for all that the Father had given him ; and it is his will that we should go to the Father in his name, for all the gifts, and blessings, he has promised to bestow on his people ; and in this way we are assured that he will answer us. And while we see so much need, of more faithful laborers being sent into the harvest, and hear so much complaint in our churches, of great lake-warmness in religion ; while we daily see the abounding of vice in our land, and how few come to Zion's solemn feasts, let us brethren be exhorted earnestly to pray.

And while we see notwithstanding, that God is on his way, that his word is fulfilling, that Antichrist is consuming, and have the greatest reason to believe, that all the grand events which are taking place in the kingdom of his providence, will eventually turn out for the enlargement of the kingdom of his grace, and the utter overthrow of mystical Babylon ; let us rejoice, and be encouraged to believe, that our prayers will soon be answered in the deliverance of Zion, and the accomplishment of all the glorious things that are spoken of the city of our God.

We are further directed in all our religious meetings, in attending to gospel institutions, and to the particular concerns of the church, in the first place, to address the great head of the church for his assistance and blessing ; remembering that without him we can do nothing ; on him we are entirely dependant for wisdom and grace, to do our duties acceptably, and in him all fullness dwells.

It is also our duty as christians, to maintain religion in our families. We have instances of this recorded in scripture, with the addition of God's approbation of the same, without doubt for our imitation, and to this purpose are the apostles directions to parents to bring up their children in *the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, and to masters to give unto their servants, *that which is just and equal* ; and as prayer is so essential to the performance of religious duties, in all other cases, we may well conclude that it is indispensibly necessary in this ; and it is generally observed, that where prayer is constantly attended in families, a regard is paid in a greater or lesser degree to religion ; and where it is neglected, all religious duties, are of course treated with neglect. But that we may feel ourselves bound to the discharge of this duty, our Lord Jesus has enjoined it on his followers, both by his example and direction ; we have it therefore recorded of him in several instances, that he prayed in particular with his disciples, who were considered as his family while he was on earth. And it is evident that he had just been engaged in this duty when they desired him to teach them how they might acceptably imitate him in this example. He therefore proceeded to direct them when they prayed to say *Our Father which art in heaven, &c.* which implied, that it was his will they should jointly petition God for his blessing on them. Let our mornings and evenings therefore, (which are the most proper seasons for the performance of this duty,) be witnesses to our family devotion : That our families may with the divine blessing, be like that of Obbedom, where the ark of the Lord abode ; and escape the wrath, denounced against the families that call not on his name.

Once more we are called upon by our great pattern and head, to imitate and obey him in frequently addressing our heavenly father in the closet. This duty being one of the greatest consequence to christians, and tending most to exalt God in our hearts, and to humble and sanctify us, is of all duties the most hated and neglected by hypocrites: for while they love to make long prayers oftentimes in public, to receive the praise of men: being on the other hand cut off from all such expectations, the words of the inspired penman, will doubtless apply to them in this case, *Will he always call upon God.* And as it is most contrary to our carnal inclinations, so it is to be feared, it is much too little practised by christians: but doubtless to this duty the words of the poet are applicable,

“ Long as they live should Christians pray,
“ For only while they pray they live.”

This duty is abundantly calculated for the benefit of all believers: here the weakest christian can pray as acceptably, as a wise and learned Paul or an eloquent Apollos, the pious breathings of the soul, being the essence of prayer; here the child of God may use the greatest freedom with his heavenly Father, and approach unto and converse with him by faith, as with an intimate friend, here he finds nothing calculated to cherish pride within him, or to lead him to have any wrong object in view, but every thing to abase, and bring him into the dust, and prepare him for heavenly enjoyments. Here also, he may continue as long as he finds it necessary in this blessed employment, without wearying others, and here without giving offence, he may confess his most secret faults, and find relief, and express all his desires to God, for himself and others. Here he may come as often as occasion calls, and find a present God, and to this duty he may apply himself, whatever are his circumstances: in this way he may be favored with the greatest manifestations of the divine approbation, obtain the clearest evidences of his adoption into the heavenly family, and enjoy the greatest foretastes of celestial glory.

Since therefore the injunctions to the duty of prayer, are so plain and so frequent in the holy scriptures, since the motives to excite us thereto are so many, and so cogent, and the encouragements given us are so great, let us never consider it as a tiresome task, but an unspeakable privilege, and let us manifest our love to God, by readily complying with the great apostle's exhortation, and never come to him in our own name, or wisdom, but remember that such guilty undeserving creatures as we are, can never find access to him, but through the mediation of his son Jesus, and that we always need the assistance of the holy spirit to help our infirmities, to indite our petitions, and by his blessed influence to awaken in us holy desires after God, and assist us to pray as we ought.

Finally brethren, let us abound in this and all other good works; that through the gracious operations of him, who *worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, we may be trained up for, and finally have an *abundant entrance administered unto us, into the everlasting kingdom, of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.* Amen.

Signed in behalf of the Association.

SETH HIGBY, Moderator.
STEPHEN ROYCE, Clerk.