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Baptists. Connecticut. Danbury Association, 1795.
Minutes ... at Pawlingstown [N. Y.] September ...
1795.

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M I N U T E S

OF THE

DANBURY BAPTIST

ASSOCIATION,

HOLDEN AT PAWLINGSTOWN, [N. Y.]

September 16th and 17th, 1795.

W E D N E S D A Y, *September 16.*

1. THE Association met according to appointment at Pawlingstown. An Introductory Sermon delivered by Elder *Hastings*, from John vi, 67.
2. Proceeded to business; Elder *Stephen Royce* was chosen Moderator, and Brother *Ebenzer Wakelee*, Clerk.
3. Letters from the several Churches in our connection, were presented, read, and the following list taken.

N. B. In the list, Ministers names in capitals. Those to whom an * is affixed were not present. From Churches marked thus † we received no letters. Dashes denote no settled Ministers.

CHURCHES.

MESSENGERS.

Added.	Dismissed	Excom.	Died.	No.
1	2		2	103
				85
1		4		40
		1	1	48
1	3			27
7				33
				29
4	7	1		40
1	3	1		23
4	22		1	119
				50
			1	31
		7	2	30

SUFFIELD,

JOHN HASTINGS,
Deacon Ephraim Robins,
Judah Phelps.

†WESTFIELD,

1st DANBURY,

ELIJAH WHEELER,
Reuben Ferris,
Deacon David Pierce.

2d DANBURY,

Deacon Calvin Peck,
Elijah Peck.

CANAAN,

Joseph Wadsworth,
Deacon Joseph Kellogg,
Elijah Whitney.

1st WALLINGFORD,

Ephraim Hough.

2d WALLINGFORD,

Letter lost.

FARMINGTON,

*CALVIN HULBERT,
Ebenezer Hawley,
Daniel Griffith.

ITCHFIELD,

AMOS TUTTLE,
Jonathan Woodworth,
Jonathan Churchill.

STRATFIELD,

STEPHEN ROYCE,
Nathan Bulkley.

†TORRINGTON,

ROXBURY,

Deacon David Malary,
Abraham Blakelee,
Isaac Fuller.

WARREN,

Stephen Wedge,
Solomon Wedge.

		Brought forward,					
		19	37	14	7	658	
AMENIA-TOWN,	{	ELIJAH WOOD,					
		Jonathan Shepard, Abner Shevaler, Thomas Satchwell.	2			25	
WATERTOWN,		*DANIEL WILDMAN,				28	
NEW-HARTFORD & WEST-BRITAIN,	{	EPAPHRAS THOMPSON,					
		Deacon Hezekiah West, Matthew Newton, jun'r.	3		1	1	75
†NEW-MILFORD,		_____				38	
SHARON,	{	_____					
		Hezekiah Carter, Joshua Millard, jun'r.	2				44
†SIMSBURY,		_____				7	
COLEBROOK,	{	RUFUS BABCOCK,					
		Elezer Bidwell, John Stevens, Joseph Bidwell.	6				31
		*BENJAMIN BALDWIN,					60
†2d SANDISFIELD,		SETH HIGBY,					
2d PAWLINGSTOWN,	{	Deacon David Simmons, Deacon Edward Southworth, Ebenezer Waklee.	8		1	1	42
		*STEPHEN SHEPARD.	11	2	1	2	47
		JOHN SHERMAN, Abraham Gillet.					21
EAST-HARTFORD,		FREEMAN HOPKINS,					
NEWTOWN,	{	Timothy Babcock, Joseph Allis, Manafeh Martin.					5
1st PAWLINGSTOWN,							
		50	39	17	11	1180	

N. B. The two last mentioned churches were at this time, received into cordial fellowship with us.

4. Voted that a committee consisting of Elders *Jonathan Sherman, Joshua Hull,* and Deacon *Whelpley* be appointed to examine the *circular and corresponding letters.*

Adjourned till to-morrow, 8 o'clock, A. M.

THURSDAY, September 17.

Met according to adjournment.

Brother *Stephen Parsons* preached from Rom. i. 16.

5. Received a messenger and letter, but no minutes, from the *New-York;* a messenger, but no letter nor minutes from the *Stonington;* and messengers,

Aug.

letters and minutes from the *Shaftsbury* associations. These messengers (being by vote invited) took a seat with us.

6. Received a message from the *Otsego* association, requesting a connection and correspondence with us ; which request, after suitable deliberation, was granted by a unanimous vote.

7. Elder *Royce's* circular letter was read and approved of, Elder *Hosmer's* corresponding letter to *Shaftsbury*, and brother *Robins'* to *New-York* associations were read and agreed to.

8. Upon Elder *Wildman's* failure, Deacon *West* was appointed to write the letter of correspondence to *Stonington* association. Said letter was read and approved of.

9. Appointed Elder *Higby* to prepare the circular letter for next year.

10. Appointed Elder *Sherman* to prepare a letter of correspondence to the *Shaftsbury*,—Deacon *West* to the *Stonington*,—Brother *Waklee* to the *New-York*, and Elder *Royce* to the *Otsego* associations against next year.

11. Appointed Elder *Sherman* to write the present corresponding letter to the *Otsego* association.

12. Appointed Elder *Royce* to superintend printing the minutes.

13. Appointed Elders *Higby*, *Wood* and *Babcock* messengers to the *Shaftsbury* ; Elders *Wheeler* and *Finch* to *New-York* ; Elders *Thompson*, *Shepard* and brother *Griffith* to the *Stonington*, and Elders *Babcock*, *Hosmer* and *Hopkins*, to the *Otsego* associations.

14. Voted, the association be holden next at *Stratfield*, on the 3d Wednesday of next September, at one o'clock, P. M.

15. Voted, that Elder *Wood* preach the introductory Sermon. In case of failure. Elder *Wildman*.

16. Appointed Elder *Thomson*, secretary to take charge of the association papers.

17. Elder *Sherman's* letter to the *Otsego* association was read and approved of.

QUERIES from the Church in East-Hartford.

Question 1st. Are the non-elect in ^{any} sense bought by the blood of CHRIST.

Answer. If by being bought, you mean to ask, whether the atonement is sufficient for the whole world ; we answer in the affirmative : But if you mean to ask, whether the atonement of CHRIST has bought any of the fallen race, so as to release them from the curse of the divine law until they are regenerated ; we answer in the negative.

Question 2d. Is the belief of a possibility of falling from grace in a member, worthy of excommunication ?

Answer. We look upon it really censurable, but proper forbearance ought to be used.

SUPPLIES for DESTITUTE CHURCHES.

Canaan, Elder *Hastings*, 2d Lord's Day in April—Elder *Thompson*, 2d do. June.
Sharon, Elder *Babcock*, 3d do. November—Elder *Thompson*, 4th do. in Nov.
Danbury, Elder *Hastings*, Lord's Day next before the Association—Elder
Royce, 2d. do. in October.
Litchfield, Elder *Thompson*, 2d do. in Dec.—Elder *Thompson*, 2d do. in May.

Voted, that a list be taken of the monies contributed by the several Churches to bear the expence of printing the minutes; and that the minutes be distributed accordingly.

The association closed with prayer; by Elder *Parker*.



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

The MESSENGERS of the several CHURCHES belonging to the Danbury Association, met in Pawlingstown, Sept. 16th and 17th, 1795.

To the CHURCHES they represent:—Greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD,

THE revolving wheel of Divine Providence hath once more presented us, with an agreeable interview, according to appointment. And hath afforded us an opportunity of hearing of the prosperity of *Zion*, in different places; not only within the vicinity of our *Association*; but from various parts of the continent: and in particular from you our Brethren, whose letters to us, are like so many refreshing streams, descending from a fruitful hill.—Although a complaint, of a want of engagement, in the great things of religion, is found in many of them, mixed with a sensibility of a declining state; yet the steadfastness in the truth discovered therein, we consider as a token that God is still mindful of his *Zion*. We assure you, Brethren, that it is our hearts desire to be workers, together with God, for the furtherance of Christian Piety, in the Churches:—In order for which, we shall call your attention to the words of the blessed JESUS, Matthew xxiv, 42, “*Watch* therefore, for ye know not what hour your LORD will come. And xxvi, 41, “*Watch* and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.”

You remember that at the close of our last annual meeting, we addressed you upon the important duty of *prayer*. Permit us now to call your attention to *watchfulness*; which we consider to be a twin duty with the former, and so essential to the success of the same, that to attempt *prayer* whilst living in the neglect of *watchfulness*, our ear should tingle with the solemn admonition of the

Great *Jehovah* by the prophet *Isaiah* “bring no more vain *oblations*, incense is an abomination unto me,—the calling of *assemblies* I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the *solemn meetings*, and when ye spread forth your hands, I will turn mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many *prayers* I will not hear.” It is not apparent from the words of our Saviour to *Peter*, “what could ye not do with me one hour?” that a neglect of this duty, was the occasion of his shameful fall, and led him on to the denial of his Lord and Master?—

For which he went out and *wept bitterly!*

By *watchfulness* then, we understand a listening ear, and an attentive mind to the requirements of heaven; together with a real activity in every christian duty. Which is evident from the words of wisdom: Blessed is the man that heareth me, *watching* daily at my gates, *waiting* at the ports of my doors.—And those of our Saviour: Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find *watching*.—And of Paul to the Ephesians, praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and *watching* thereunto with all perseverance. By which means only, we can prove that we are the disciples of the LAMB.

It is our indispensable duty to search carefully the Oracles of God, for an understanding of his will: The noble Berians were commended for their attention to this rule. Also that we sacredly revere the Divine Oracles, as our only rule, both in faith and practice; and never listen to human reason, and our own imaginations, or feelings, to the violation of the divine requirements: But ever esteem it our highest happiness to follow the blessed *Jesus*, in the lowly footsteps of his preceptive will; lest we should meet with this pathetic reproof, “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?” Remember *Brethren*, that it is not sufficient only to know the will of our Lord, but our happiness is essentially contained in that part of *watchfulness* that leads to a careful conformity to the same.—*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

Furthermore, our duty towards ourselves and our christian brethren, may be considered as an essential part of *watchfulness*: We do well carefully to *watch* over our selves; in which it is not sufficient for us only to see that we fall not into gross and scandalous sins; but that in life we shun the very appearance of evil; Hence we shall guard against all idle conduct, and looseness of conversation. We had better not speak nor act, unless some valuable purpose is thereby answered. Neither is our *watchfulness* called only to our words and actions; but to the thoughts of our hearts: As was well observed by the pious resolutions of a worthy divine; “I resolve, by the grace of God, so to *watch* over myself, as not to let one single thought slip, without examining from whence it comes, and whither it tends.” “*Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it is the issues of life,*” saith the wise man.

Would there a proper attention paid to our thoughts, by observing the exercises of our minds; it would serve mightily to guard us from many sins, which so easily beset us; and prepare us for near approach, by constant addresses to the God of all *Grace*, for the display of his love (that excellent grace) upon our hearts, and the hearts of our *brethren*. In vain do we watch over our *brethren*, “*when our own vinyard we have not kept.*” But by careful attention to the divine rule, and *watching* over ourselves, and bringing our bodies into subjection to the laws of *Christ*; we shall meet the divine approbation,—“*Well done good and faithful servant.*”—And be prepared faithfully and tenderly to *watch* over our brothers, in the bowels of love; not for their halting, but for their helping together in godliness; according to the mind of *Christ*. That we ought to *watch* even one another, is evident from the oracles of *truth*; in which we are called upon, to *exhort* one another daily, *admonish, reprove, rebuke*, with all long suffering. And to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly: and mark such as cause division, contrary to the doctrine we have learned of *Christ* and his *apostles*. It is also important that we purge out the old leaven, “*for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*”

Hence, *brethren*, be faithful and strict in your discipline, and see that the divine call is attended in the same, according to Matthew xviii, 15, &c. Let us so *watch* over ourselves, when dealing with our brothers; as to be governed by the spirit of the Gospel; considering the cause, not our own, but the *Lord's*. And let our ultimate end be, the glory of God, the honor of religion, and good of our *brethren*. For on that depends, in some good degree the health and prosperity of our *Churches*.

Be also careful that you receive none to your fellowship, but such as give a gospel evidence of a work of grace upon their hearts; that your light may shine and Zion appear, clear as the *sun*, fair as the *moon*, and terrible as an army with *banners*. If these things be in you & abound, they will make, that ye are neither barren nor unfruitful; but fat & flourishing as the cedars in Lebanon; meek and humble as the willows, bowing by the water courses. Behold! how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; “it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even *Aaron's* beard, that ran down to the skirts of his garments.—*Charity never faileth,*” it is the golden link which inseparably unites *Christ* and the believer together; and makes the heavenly choir unite their HALLALUJAHs to him that liveth forever and ever.

It is not a neglect of *watchfulness* enervating that powerful weapon all *prayer*, the principal cause of that general complaint, we hear from the churches, of languour and deadness in the things of religion; and the lamentations that is made by many; “O! that it was with me as in days past, when the candle of the *Lord* shone around my dwelling, and with joy I drew water out of the well of *salvation*; a comparison of which, the present state of my mind is but a barren wilderness.

And then, *brethren*, to do your first works,—begin at home;—be seated by the throne of grace with holy fervor, and in the language of the *psalmist*, “Arise, O Lord, and plead thine own cause.” And give him no rest, until he rend the *heavens* and come down, and make *Jerusalem* a *pyre* in the earth. Also, *watch* for the coming of your LORD, for at an hour that ye think not, he may be at the *door*.—Having therefore, your minds stayed on the *eternal Rock*, ye may be calm as a summer evening, even in the hour of adversity, and say with the *psalmist*, “God is our refuge, and strength, a very present help in time of trouble; therefore will not we fear,” though the *earth* be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the *sea*, though the waters thereof *roar*, and be troubled, the mountains *shake* with the swelling thereof, *Salah*. Wherefore, take to yourselves the whole armour of God, viz. “The girdle of *truth*,—the breast plate of *righteousness*,—the *Gospel of peace*—the shield of *Faith*—the helmet of *salvation*—the sword of the *spirit*, which is the word of God.” that ye may be able to stand in this evil *day*.

We have the happiness to inform you, *brethren*, that our present meeting, has been favored with some sensible smiles, from the divine presence; and that a general agreement has prevailed through the whole. We have received good news from some of our churches, in particular from that at *Farmington*; and from various other parts of the continent. Which makes it evident, that God is on his way accomplishing the purposes of his grace.

Finally Brethren, may the *Lord*, who will judge the quick and the dead, at his coming, quicken us all to our duty.—That when the midnight cry shall be heard! Behold the *Bridegroom* cometh! go ye out to meet him: we may be ready, with our *lamps* trimmed and *burning*; and be like men waiting for the coming of *JESUS*! at the sound of the arch-angel's *trump*, bursting the *heavens*: attended with a heavenly retinue! at whose approach the elements shall melt with fervent heat! the *sun* shall leave his orbit! the *moon* shall be turned into blood! and the stars of heaven shall fall, as the untimely figs shaken of a mighty wind! We may then, with *barp* in hand, meet him in the air! rejoicing that our redemption draweth near, and so ever be with the *LORD*.—*For which we shall ever pray*.—Concluding in the language of the dear redeemer, “*What I say unto you; I say unto all WATCH.*”

In behalf of the Association,

STEPHEN ROYCE, Moderator
EBENEZER WAKELEE, Clerk