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Baptists. Connecticut. Danbury Association, 1798.

Minutes . . . at Bristol, October . . . 1798.

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# MINUTES

OF THE

## DANBURY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

H E L D

AT BRISTOL, OCTOBER 3d and 4th, 1798.

*Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters.*

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3d.

1. ASSOCIATION met according to appointment at Bristol; Introductory Sermon delivered by Brother Wood, from Acts xvii. 30th, 31st. "AND THE TIMES OF THIS IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT; BUT NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT. BECAUSE HE HATH APPOINTED A DAY IN THE WHICH HE WILL JUDGE THE WORLD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS BY THAT MAN WHOM HE HATH ORDAINED WHEREOF HE HATH GIVEN ASSURANCE UNTO ALL MEN IN THAT HE HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD.

2. Brother Seth Higby chosen Moderator, and Brother Daniel Wildman 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; Licenced Preachers in Small Capitals; those to whose names an \* is affixed were not present; — dashes denote no settled Minister; from Churches marked thus † we received no letters.

**Churches.**

**Messengers.**

Churches.	Messengers.	Added.	Mem.	Comm.	Red.	o.
Suffield,	JOHN HASTINGS, Deacon Judah Phelps, Samuel Smith, Daniel Bestor, Reuben Allen jun.	26	3	1		121
+ 1st. Danbury,						40
2d Danbury,	BENNET PEPPER, Daniel Wildman, John Scribner,	23				63
+ Westfield,						84
Canaan,	Joseph Kellogg, Gedeon Barns,					27
1st. Wallingford,	JEDUTHAN HIGBY, Abner Mitchel,					30
2d. Wallingford,	Dea. Jesse Dickerman,		1		2	22
	Dea. Ebenezer Hawley, Dea. Cornelius Cornwal, Phinehas Brunson, Isaac Brunson, Stoddard Wightman.		1	2		61
Litchfield,	Deacon Levi Mofs, Joel Humiston,					28
Stratfield,	STEPHEN ROYCE, Deacon John Edwards,		1	3		2 112
Roxbury,	Isaac Fuller,		4	1		35
Amenia-Town,	ELIJAH WOOD,				2	25
+ Torrington,						49
Wolcott,	DANIEL WILDMAN, Deacon Zuar Brackett, Deacon Oliver Dutton,			5		45
+ Warren,						31
New-Hartford & West-Briton.	EPAPH'S THOMSON, Dea. Zechariah Watson, Dea. Hezekiah West, Ichabod Stark,				7	66

Churches.	Messengers.	Added.	Disfr.	Expore.	Died.	No.
+ New-Milford,						38
Colebrook,	{ RUFUS BABCOCK, Elisha Hawley,	2		1		33
+ Sharon.						24
2d. Sandersfield	{ BENJ'N. BALDWIN, Jonathan Smith, 2d. Elisha Heath,	10		1	1	89
2d Paulington,	{ SETH HIGBY, Dea. David Simmons, Joseph Belding,					53
East-Hartford,	{ Benjamin Case, Samuel Mawley,					33
Simsbury,	{ Deacon Jarad Mills, Thomas Dyer,					7
Newtown,	{ JOHN SHERMAN* Samuel Churchel	4				30
1st. Pauling- ston,	{ ASHBEL B. HALL, Joseph Allis, Robert Chandler,	1	7	1	2	47
Middletown,	{ Daniel Kelley, Enoch Green,	1	1			27
Winsted,	{ ISAAC BELLOWS, Randal Shattuck, Israel Douglafs,					14
	Total,	76	17	13	7	1227

N. B. The last mentioned Church received at our present session.

4th. Voted Brothers Royce, Nelson, and Collier, as a committee to examine our Circular and Corresponding Letters.

5th. Adjourned till to-morrow morning 8 o'clock A. M.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4th.

*Met according to Adjournment.*

Meeting opened by Prayer, by Brother Gray.

6th, Brother Kelley's Circular letter, and Brother West's corresponding letter was read and approved.

7th. Received a letter and minutes from the Shaftsbury Association

by Brother Gray, likewise a letter and minutes from the Stonington Association by Brother Ebenezer Harris, also a letter from the Otsego Association by Brother Bacon.

Elders and Brethren from corresponding associations with other Ministers of our order occasionally present, were desired to take a seat with us.

8th. Voted that Brethren, Higby, Royce, Nelson, Gray, Shepard, Thomson, Dickinson, Deacon Higby, Kelley, Clark, and Babcock, be appointed as a committee to visit Westford Church, and inquire into the reasons of their restoring Adam Hamilton to the office of an Elder among them, and make report at our next Session.

9th. Appointed Brethren Wood, Royce, Higby Baldwin, Woodworth, Wildman, W. West to the Shaftsbury; Brethren, Nelson and Harris to the Stonington; Brethren, Collier Hall and Sherman to the Newyork; Brethren, Baldwin, Olmsted, and Bulkeley, to the Otsego Associations.

10th. Appointed Brother Royce to prepare the Circular letter, and Brother Wildman the Corresponding letter for the ensuing year.

11th. Voted that this Association be holden the next year on the 1st. Wednesday in October next, at one o'clock P. M. with the first Baptist Church in Paulington, at their meeting house.—Brother Babcock to preach the introductory Sermon, in case of failure Elder Baldwin.

12th. Voted to inquire into the state of our delinquent Churches.

13th. Appointed as Committees for that purpose the following Brethren, viz. Higby and Royce, to the first in Danbury; Sherman and Wildman to the New-Milford; Wood, Shevalier, Shepard and Kellogg, to the Sharon, and Thompson, Shepard, Baldwin and Babcock, to the Torrington Churches.

14th. Appointed Brother Bester to superintend printing the minutes.

15th. Voted that Brethren Hastings, Wood, and Higby, be a committee to return thanks to the Minister and people of this parish for their kindness in favoring us with their Meeting-House.

#### SUPPLIES FOR DESTITUTE CHURCHES.

Litchfield,	{	Brother Bellows,	3d.	Lord's Day	in November.
		Brother Wildman,	2d.	do.	in May.
		Brother Hastings,	2d.	do.	in June.
		Brother Shepard,	2d.	do.	in July.
		Brother Royce,	2d.	do.	in September.
2d. Wallingford,	{	Brother Babcock,	last	do.	in September.
		Brother Shepard,	2d.	do.	in June.
		Brother Hastings,	2d.	do.	in July.
Middletown,		Brother Shepard,	2d.	do.	in January.

Concluding Sermon by Brother Collier, from Isaiah ix. 6.

---AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL,---

## CIRCULAR LETTER.

*The Elders and Messengers of the several Baptist Churches met in Association in Bristol, the 3d and 4th days of October, 1798, holding the Doctrine of particular Election—the original Guilt and total Depravity of Mankind—free Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ—the final perseverance of the Saints in Grace—Water Baptism by Immersion, upon a Profession of Repentance and Faith, and the punishment of the wicked, in as unlimited a sense as the Happiness of the Righteous.*

TO THE CHURCHES WHOM THEY REPRESENT, SEND  
CHRISTIAN SALUTATION.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

**H**AVING enjoyed another opportunity of meeting according to our annual appointment, we rejoice in the information from a number of our Churches, of the manifestation of divine grace, and additions of such as we hope will be saved, and the rest remaining steadfast in the doctrines of the gospel: Yet mourning their low estate, we would earnestly supplicate the effusions of his holy spirit, whilst we address you on the subject of brotherly love:—Not that we consider the subject as new, for undoubtedly you have often heard it treated on; but sure we are it cannot be exhausted, nor too often brought into view. It cannot be exhausted, for it proceeds from that immense fountain, the GOD OF LOVE: It cannot be too often brought into view because it is the life and spring of every Christian duty. It is a theme that will forever warm the Christian's heart--it gives delight to Heaven, and heightens the Angelic notes of praise—It proceeds from our heavenly Father; it is he who begets that divine principle in the believers heart; he alone supports it by the breathing of his spirit, and being possessed of this holy exercise, when his love is shed abroad in our hearts, we love him who beget: It is then that we are enamoured with every display of the divine perfections, and our delight is in the God of love, & in his holy law; and all this is the effect of God's love to us. This is assigned as a reason by the beloved disciple John "Why we ought to love one another"—This tunes the notes of praise for the saints on high, & perpetuates their joys, this joins and secures their holy society to dwell forever with the God of love. This is the only sure bond of Christian union and fellowship here below, this makes their communion sweet, it is the only life of social worship, "for being partakers of the divine nature, and being renewed in the inner man after the image of him who created us," wherever we discover that

divine likeness we can but love it, and we delight in communicating to each other the wonders of redeeming love—This makes the saints drink into one spirit, and joins every kindred, tongue, and nation in one holy family—This animates the ministering servants of our Lord and Saviour, to labor (according to their several gifts and measures of grace) in his vineyard—this makes them feel as brethren, and reaches the greatest to his servants of all—this helps Christians to bear each others burthen and to fulfil the law of Christ—this guards the walls of our holy city, and is ever watchful to keep out every foe; it makes brethren watch over each other in the love of God, makes them faithful to each other according to gospel rules—It is the spirit of Christian discipline and is the only thing that purifies the church—It is a prompter to keep our own hearts, and as such it leads to every private and relative duty—it possesses that benevolent nature, that altho its chief delight is with the saints, it sheds its benign influence on all around—it moves to a compassionate feeling to all mankind, and seeks new subjects for the King of Glory—it sympathizes with the sufferings of all mankind, and labors to console the afflicted & distressed. It alleviates the sorrows of human life and considers these light afflictions, as working a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—It dignifies human nature and makes man possess (in a measure) the amiable qualities of his maker—These, brethren, are some of the many blessings of this divine principle. Shall we then be excited to draw from that immense fountain, the pure streams of consolation? Let us labor to possess the true spirit of brotherly love—Let us consider that destitute of that, no community of Christians will long visibly subsist in any tolerable union, even in the appearance of mankind, much less in the sight of him who is Omniscient.

In vain do we assume the character of Churches or Associations; in vain is our pretence to union or fellowship, on any other ground, in vain do we attend the discipline of the church of Christ, whether in private or public labor, without this in real exercise. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so, without that spirit which is ever productive of brotherly love, all our formal covenants, external rites and ceremonies, worship or ordinances are like the dead carcase, wearing a visible form, without spirit or life, and become odious in the sight of the living. Let us then labor to obtain that love which our blessed Saviour speaks of, that shall make us known and distinguished amongst all men, we are his disciples, even by possessing that disinterested love to all who are partakers of his holiness.

Signed in behalf of the Association,

SETH HIGBY, Moderator,  
DANIEL WILDMAN, Clerk.

THE BOND OF ASSOCIATION,  
TO  
CORRESPONDING ASSOCIATIONS,  
SANDWICH, GREETING:

*Beloved Brethren,*

**A**S the kind Parent of the Universe, has spared our lives, and permitted us with joy to welcome the return of our Anniversary INTERVIEW, and since local distance, with their circumstances, forbid that we should all meet together on earth, to form our acquaintance with each other, the kind Lord who is possessed of all wisdom, has furnished us the means of corresponding by letter, altho remote from each other. May we therefore be so wise as to improve them to his glory, and the mutual happiness and consolation of each other.

We rejoice in the God of our salvation, that he should visit fallen men with his grace, redeem them from under the power and dominion of sin, and translate them into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they might be in a suitable situation to unite together, to promote his declarative glory, in opposition to a gainsaying world, and to oppose all vice and immorality. It therefore highly concerns us who have named the name of Christ, to be faithful in his cause; to follow him in the pathway of obedience, and manifest to the world that there is a reality in the religion we profess:—Especially, when we view the incorrigible, impenitent, and openly profane, eagerly pursuing every method by which they may express their absolute contempt, both of the authority and goodness of God, as tho the floodgates of sin and abomination were hoisted, and each one were striving to be foremost in the horrid stream leading down to the black regions of the burning main.

Many that have been zealous professors of the Christian religion, have awfully backsliden, joined affinity with the world, and brot reproach on the innocent cause of the Redeemer. The great want of vital piety and practical Godliness, in many of our churches; the general coldness and stupidity which prevails among professed Christians; the great spread of infidelity, atheism, deism, and almost all kinds of heresy; our land threatened with blood and carnage by a powerful foreign foe, and pestilence with the besom of destruction in awful rapidity sweeping thousands of our citizens into eternity, to appear before the tribunal of the great Jehovah, there to receive their final doom.

Dear Brethren, the consideration of these things ought to rouse us from our lethargy and stupidity, that we may arise and cry mightily to God, that he would turn away his Judgments, pour out his holy spirit on us, and save our guilty land from threatened ruin. But, we wish not, with the Egyptians to dwell on the dark side of the cloud, but desire to enter the camp of Israel, though it may be night with us, yet thro the power of our divine Redeemer, the cloudy pillow may be transformed into a shining light. We have reason to rejoice, that God yet reigns



King in Zion, and that he will guide his chosen into the  
wilderness world: That Jesus our spiritual Joshua will (in spite of all  
our enemies) lead us into the promised land.

We rejoice that Christ is yet on the mercy seat, interceding for  
poor perishing sinners, and sending forth his holy Spirit in many places,  
subduing their hearts, and bringing them in subjection to his will:---  
Holding out the hand of grace to his weary followers: comforting them  
under trials, and encouraging them on the road that leads to joys on  
high, and has promised in his word, that abiding together  
for good to them that love and keep his commandments, they may then  
with alacrity and joy, pursue our heavenly journey, by the strength  
of our glorious Captain, defy the powers of darkness, relying on  
his word, that no weapons that can be formed against us shall prosper.

Finally Brethren, let us strive to adorn our profession, by a well or-  
dered life and conversation, that we may with Mary and Elizabeth,  
be found walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord  
blameless; laying aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily be-  
fet us; that when we have run our race, and finished our course here  
below, we may meet death with fortitude, and in the morning of the  
resurrection, come forth clad with that spotless robe of Christ's  
righteousness; and receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

*Signed in behalf of the Association,*

SETH HIGBY, Moderator,  
DANIEL WILDMAN, Clerk.

*Circular Letter.*