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Baptists. Connecticut. Danbury Association, 1810.

Minutes of the ... at Hartford, (Conn.) October 3d
and 4th, 1810.

n. p., [1810]. 8 pp.

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MINUTES

OF THE

Danbury Baptist Association,

HELD AT HARTFORD, (Conn.)

October 3d and 4th, 1819.

WEDNESDAY, October, 3d.*

1. **A**T half past ten o'clock, agreeably to appointment, Brother Daniel Wildman delivered the introductory Sermon, from Rev. iii. 19th.

2. Chose Brother Rufus Babcock, *Moderator*, and Brother Asahel Morse, *Clerk*.

3. After prayer by the Moderator, proceeded to read the Letters from the Churches, and took the following account of the Members added, dismissed, excluded, or who have died in the year past, and the present number in each Church.

N. B. Ordained Minister's names are in *small capitals*; those not ordained in *Italic*; those to which an (*) is affixed, were not present. Dashes (—) denote no settled ministers. From Churches marked thus (†) we received no information.

Churches.	Messengers.	Added.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Died.	Total.
Suffield	* JOHN HASTINGS	10	36	0	6	130
	JACOB WINCHEL					
	David King					
	Daniel Bestor					
	Abijah Remington					
	Hezekiah Huntington					
	Samuel Hastings.					
Meriden	SAMUEL MILLER	6				67
	Ambrose Hough					
	Nathaniel Yale					
	Joseph Twiss					
Southington & Farmington }	Eleazer Hawley	2	2	3	55	
	Chauncey Merriman					
	Jeremiah Neal					
Litchfield	—	8				46
	Ephraim Smedley					
	John Todd					

* On Tuesday Evening Brother Pease preached from 51 Ps. 12 and 13: and on Wednesday Morning at 6 o'clock we assembled for Prayer.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Auded.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Stratfield	ASAHEL MORSE Eli Adams	10	2		3	150
Roxbury	ISAAC FULLER Joel Beach	4		1		99
Wolcott & } Bristol } Warren	DANIEL WILDMAN <i>Oliver Tuttle</i>	3				99
	_____					40
Colebrook	Stephen Wedge RUFUS BABCOCK Elezzer Bidwell Oliver Wilcox	7		3	2	135
2d Sandisfield	_____ * Amos Spring Judd J. Hubbard Samuel Merrill	1	3		1	165
† 2d Dover	_____					35
East-Hartford	_____			1	1	32
	John Kene Jared Lewis					
Canton	JARED MILLS Elisha Case Obed Higley	1			1	16
† Newtown	JOHN SHERMAN					36
† 1st Dover	ANANIAS DERTHICK					38
† 1st Middletown	ENOCH GREEN Benjamin Gilbert William Gilbert Joseph B. Gilbert	4		2		97
Winchester	ISAAC BELLOWS Rufus Grenell			3	1	106
Hartford	HENRY GREW <i>Ephraim Robins</i> John Bolles Luther Savage	7		4		103
Granville	JONATHAN SHELDON	3	1		1	79
Sharon & Cornwall	<i>Hezekiah West</i>	4	2	5	1	79
Armenia Town	_____ <i>Oliver Wilson</i>	20			1	72
Granby	BENNETT PEPPER † Samuel Gillett	2		2		31
† Milton	_____					39
Berlin	_____	3				29
	Jeremiah H. Osgood Gideon Williams					

* On the 24th of July last, our dear Brother, Elder Benjamin Baldwin fell a-sleep in Jesus.

|| In February last our beloved Brother, Elder Elijah Wood departed in the triumph of holy Faith.

† Doctor Horace Hillyer has been excluded by the above Church

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Added</i>	<i>Dismissed</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Dir'd.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
North East Town	* FREEMAN HOPKINS ISAAC ALLERTON Martin Lawrence	2	8	2		82
Wethersfield	————— Simeon Frances John Frances.					40
Total		97	54	23	21	1900

4. Voted, to give fellowship to the Baptist Church in Wethersfield, as a Sister Church in this Association.

5. Received from Sister Associations, as follows :

<i>From the</i>			<i>Messengers.</i>
Shaftsbury	Letter	Minutes	—————
Stonington	Letter	Minutes	N. DODGE A. WILCOX.
Otsego	Letter	Minutes	—————
Warwick	————	————	—————
Warren	Letter	Minutes	—————
Groton Union } Conference }	Letter	Minutes	J. UTLEY A. WILCOX
Sturbridge	Letter	Minutes	D. PEASE W. Palmer
Rensselaerville	————	————	—————

6. Appointed, Brethren Morse, Bradley and Huntington, to examine the Circular and Corresponding Letters.

7. Appointed Brethren to attend Sister Associations.

<i>To the</i>	<i>Brethren</i>
Shaftsbury	BABCOCK and MORSE
Stonington	BRADLEY and GREW
New-York	MORSE
Otsego	WILDMAN and MORSE
Warwick	ALLERTON and WILSON
Saratoga	Martin Lawrence
Warren	BRADLEY, MORSE and GREW
Groton Union Conference	UTLEY, WILCOX and Tuttle
Sturbridge	Daniel Bestor
Rensselaerville	ALLERTON

After prayer by brother Wildman, adjourned till 8 o'clock to morrow morning.

In the evening brother Wilcox preached from Acts x. 34, 35 ; there was also preaching at different places in the vicinity.

THURSDAY, October 4th.

Met according to adjournment. United in praise : and in prayer with Brother Pepper.

8. Read and accepted the Circular Letter prepared by Brother Pepper.

9. Read and accepted the Corresponding Letter prepared by Brother Tuttle.

10. Appointed Brother Huntington to write our Circular, and Brother Allerton our Corresponding Letter, for the next year.

11. The important design, of the 17th article in our last Minutes, has been promoted by the institution of a Missionary Society in this association. The Churches are earnestly requested to contribute, as the Lord hath prospered them, to support this infant establishment; which we hope will instrumentally advance the kingdom of our adorable Redeemer.

12. The Church in Granville having proposed to be dismissed from this Association, and unite with another, on account of local convenience: Voted, that they have liberty so to act.

13. The Church in Wallingford being dissolved, it is discontinued in our minutes.

14. Voted to hold our next Association at the Baptist Meeting House in North East Town, the first Wednesday in October next, at 10 o'clock A. M.

15. Appointed Brother Bradley to preach the introductory Sermon, and in case of failure Brother Morse.

16. Appointed Brother Grew to superintend the printing and distribution of our Minutes.

Concluded with divine worship. Brother Sawyer preached from Prov. xxiii. 23. first clause. Brother Dodge also discoursed from Rom. v. 20, 21. and Brother Morse in the evening from 1 Cor. iii. 22.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The ELDERS and MESSENGERS of the DANBURY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, to the CHURCHES, they represent, send Christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

WE invite your attention to a few remarks on the important subject of divine worship; particularly that which relates to the visible Gospel Church. As a Supreme Being is generally acknowledged by the inhabitants of this world, they feel themselves under obligation to offer him some kind of adoration. In attempting this in sinful ignorance, a great variety of forms and objects have been adopted. All worship may be reduced to true or false, christian or antichristian; and as such it tends to the benefit or injury of our souls; to the advantage or disadvantage of the Redeemer's cause; and to the honor or reproach of the divinely glorious author and object of all true worship. When we contemplate the true object of holy adoration in

his perfections, exhibited to our view in his works of creation and providence, and most illustriously in the work of redemption revealed in his word ; we see the strictest propriety in the words of our Lord to the Woman of Samaria ; “ God is a Spirit ; and they that worship him, *must* worship him in Spirit and in truth. In this important sentence, the true worship and worshippers are clearly distinguished from the false. God the true Spirit, requires spiritual or holy worship ; consequently, none but those who worship in spirit and in truth, are true worshippers. But in order to be such worshippers, it is necessary to have the true knowledge of God revealed to our hearts by his word and spirit ; to discern in a spiritual manner, the distinction between him and all idol and imaginary Deities : without which, we shall doubtless worship we know not what. In order to be true church worshippers, Christ the mediator must be known in opposition to antichrist ; and his rules, in opposition to those which are antichristian. These rules must be well understood, received and obeyed, that our worship may be performed agreeably to the order of Christ’s House.

For these rules, we are not to appeal to the Jewish ceremonies ; but to the christian code ; not to the former or latter inventions and traditions of men, but to the substantial and unchangeable truth of God : not handed down to us from the Church at Rome, but from our gracious Father in Heaven, by his holy Son and inspired apostles, little known in the annals of antichrist, but clearly disclosed in the new testament of our Lord.

From these statements, we are led to see that worship is true, and acceptable to God, when the infinite Jehovah is the object ; his sacred word the rule ; and by his people, influenced by his holy spirit, it is offered through the glorious mediator. Such worship being performed by the true Church is not without form ; but has the best form, which is attended to decently and in order ; but as the most perfect shape of a human body can never give life to the same ; so, no forms can make worship true ; but the truth and life of it consists in its being spiritual. The best prayer ever made by any of the fallen race, if not the language of the heart and endited by the holy spirit, is but solemn mockery or vain repetition ; and the most orthodox preaching abstract from the spirit, can never give life to the soul. Is it not a dishonor to the adorable Creator, to be placed on a level with an idol or antichrist ? And in what is he materially distinguished but in the *spirituality* of his worship ? void of which, no spiritual people, no word which is spirit and life, nor even God the infinite spirit are manifest.

Baal’s worshippers maintained the *form* with great exactness ; but the true God of Israel, his cause and servants were known, in his answering spiritual prayer by fire from heaven. Antichrist also in the present day is not wanting for form and order, he has altar, offering and priest ; yet neither he nor his followers can ever boast of coming in the power of the spirit ; nor can they, but deceitfully, cause fire to descend from heaven in the sight of men.

How important it is then, dear brethren, for the good of immortal souls, the advancement of the precious cause, and the declarative glory of God, that the spirit of holy religion is maintained in our hearts and lives, and in all parts of our worship both private and public. Let this be our ardent desire in all our worship; thus we shall seek and find holiness, happiness, grace and glory: we shall glorify God and promote the general good. But if we desire and rest contented with forms of exterior show, we are more inconsistent and unwise, than the disciples who sought the living among the dead.

But if spiritual life and exercises are of such consequence in worshipping God acceptably, how do those worship who are destitute of both? Do they pray or preach better than the Pharisees to whom God said "in vain do ye worship me"? And do we in any part of divine worship make a nearer approach to heaven, and more resemble and unite with the holy worshippers and worship there, than when with grace we unitedly sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord? Is it not evident that graceless people never sing with the spirit and the understanding, as the divine rule requires. Hence it appears that their forms of praise, with all other offerings of unbelievers, have no relation to that of Abel; but being near akin to that of Cain, must reasonably meet the disapprobation of God as did his, for without faith it is impossible to please him. Indeed, without grace the theory of singing may be learned, the voice may be improved, and a choir of singers with great decency and order may perform externally, whilst the melody of sound captivates the passions and charms the ear; but this is infinitely short of singing the Lord's song.

But as our narrow limits forbid enlargement, and being persuaded that christians in general, and our brethren whom we address in particular, do believe these sentiments; let us conclude with exhorting one another to holy obedience. The principal design of this address is to promote in the Churches a *practice* correspondent to these sentiments of truth; that our light may so shine before others, that the true order of Christ's house may be manifested, and his holy worship maintained in primitive simplicity and purity. Thus shall we shew forth the praise of our glorious Redeemer; thus shall we enjoy his divine presence, and holy communion with him, and thus shall we by divine grace, be meeting for the perfect and eternal worship of the Church triumphant, where nothing shall enter that defileth or maketh a lie, but they who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. AMEN.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.



The DANBURY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, to the ASSOCIATIONS with whom we correspond :

BELIEVED IN THE LORD,

WITH emotions of gratitude to the great master of assemblies, we desire to express our thankfulness that we are permitted with joy to welcome the return of another anniversary interview, and for such tokens of his favor as have refreshed our hearts, and made us to rejoice in the rock of our salvation. Dear brethren, we are glad to maintain our correspondence with you, and though we cannot favor you with such pleasing accounts of the displays of divine power and grace, in the conversion of sinners among us, as in some former communications ; yet we would gratefully acknowledge the superabounding mercy of God, which has been exercised towards our Churches in general, and that we have enjoyed some good degree of peace and order ; that the holy spirit has been poured out for the consolation of God's children, and the ingathering of some precious souls to the fold of Christ.

While the enemies of practical godliness are busily employed in sowing the seeds of error, we yet rejoice that a careful and close attention to the pure doctrine contained in the holy scriptures, generally prevails among our brethren. At this eventful period, when error abounds, and spiritual wickedness appears in high places, may the servants of Christ feel the importance of giving the most earnest heed to the doctrines of the Bible. Errors in opinion are very closely connected with errors in practice. Where sentiments prevail which are contrary to the word of God, pure religion does not abound. The holy scriptures exhibit to us the divine character, and contain those sublime truths, which it highly concerns all professing christians to receive, as the only rule of faith and practice. How necessary it is then for all who are on the Lord's side, to take their proper stand, and manfully defend the cause of truth ; not with carnal weapons, but with the armour of righteousness, which the great captain of our salvation hath provided for all who fight under his banner. As christians, we may render important service to the cause of christianity. by exemplifying our religion in our lives and conduct ; and by being able, by arguments drawn from scripture and reason, to convince gainsayers. In order to do this, christians must make the word of God the man of their counsel. To have a right understanding of the holy scriptures, to have a clear view of Bible doctrine in its connection, we must study and search for knowledge as for hid treasure. In this way the friends of truth will be able to meet the enemy to advantage, and confront error in all its specious and flattering forms.

But to conclude. Dear brethren, we have abundant cause to

rejoice at the growing interest of the Redeemer's Kingdom, notwithstanding satan and wicked men are using all the means in their power to weaken and destroy it. The effusions of the holy spirit which have been experienced in some parts of our land the present year, demand our warm expressions of gratitude to God. Jesus is still riding forth in the chariot of salvation with his bow and crown, conquering the hearts of his enemies, and bringing thousands of poor perishing sinners from the kingdom of darkness, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The great God is rolling on his purposes, and evidently opening the way for a speedy accomplishment of his prophecies concerning Zion. The glorious state of the Church is fast advancing. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, when Zion shall arise and shine forth in her apostolical purity. In some parts, where heathenish darkness has long pervaded the hearts of men, light and truth are breaking forth like the morning; and the mists of superstition and ignorance, are vanishing away like the fog before the rising beams of the sun. May these joyful hopes, brethren, awaken our zeal, strengthen our faith, and enable us to wait with patience for their accomplishment in the fulfilment of the divine promise.

AMEN.

RUFUS BABCOCK, *Moderator.*
ASAHEL MORSE, *Clerk.*

*Extract from an address to the Churches on the subject of Missions
in the Shaftsbury Minutes.*

“ Were arguments necessary, to call forth the benevolent services of Christians to a dying world, arguments the most weighty might be produced. You have found the gospel of infinite importance to yourselves; yea, the one thing needful, and the pearl of great price; by which your souls are redeemed from everlasting ruin. The glory and greatness of this world shrink to nothing, and less than nothing, when compared with the gospel of the grace of God. A man that gains the whole world, must be eternally miserable, if he loses his soul. Mankind, by nature, are under condemnation, and the wrath of God abides upon them, and there is no possible way of removing the curse, but by the gospel of Christ. How infinitely precious did the gospel appear to you, when you found it the power of God and the wisdom of God, conveying pardoning mercy and boundless love to your despairing souls. How precious was the preached word. What were your desires that others might come within its sound? Surely they were inexpressible.

Were all the members of this association to go as far as the females in Boston, Providence and Salem, who are constituted into Mite-Societies and tax themselves with a cent a week, we should annually raise \$1726. 92.

What shall we think of that conscience which can give *Dollars* for ornaments, to appear in the fashions of the world, and scrupulously withhold even *Cents*, in the cause of God. We are persuaded, Brethren that many of you have inconsiderately overlooked your duty respecting this important subject. A word to the wise is sufficient.”