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Minutes ... in Wallingford ... October 7 & 8, 1812.

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MINUTES

OF THE

Danbury Baptist Association,

HELD AT THE

WELLS MEETING-HOUSE,

IN

WALLINGFORD, (Conn.)

October 7 & 8, 1812.



MINUTES, &c.



WEDNESDAY, October 7.

1. **A**T 10 o'clock A. M. Brother Rufus Babcock, agreeably to appointment, preached the Introductory Sermon, from Isaiah lv. 3. "Hear, and your souls shall live."*

2. Chose Brother Asahel Morse, *Moderator*, and Brother Joshua Bradley, *Clerk*.

3. Adjourned for one hour.

4. Met according to adjournment. Prayer by Brother Nehemiah Dodge.

5. Read the Letters from the Churches, and took the following account of Members added, dismissed, excluded, and died, the past year; also, the present number in each Church.

N. B. The names of ordained Ministers are in *small capitals*; licentiates in *Italic*. Those with this mark (*) were not present. From Churches marked thus (†) we had no information this session. Vacant Churches distinguished by a dash (—)

* In the evening Brother Allerton preached in the Wells Meeting-House, from John viii. 31, 32. There was preaching in different parts of the town.

On Thursday at 2 o'clock P. M. Brother Dodge delivered an evangelical Discourse, founded on Micah vi. 1—8.

Churches.	Ministers and Messengers.	Added.	Dismiss'd	Excluded	Died.	Total.
Suffield	—————	23	5	24	1	110
	Israel Phelps					
Meriden	SAMUEL MILLER	15				107
	Deacon John Hail					
	Charles Ives					
Southington & Farmington	} —————	2	2	1	2	39
	} Deacon Ephraim Hough					
	} Deacon Ezra Clark					
Litchfield	—————	5		1		57
	Deacon Levi Moss					
	—————					

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
†† Stratfield	ASAHEL MORSE Deacon David Silliman Robert Wilson Eli Adams	7			3	159
Roxbury	* ISAAC FULLER Asahel Frisbie Joel Beach			1	3	96
† Warren	_____					37
Wolcott & Bristol	DANIEL WILDMAN Edmond Todd David Byington	2			3	98
Colebrook	RUFUS BABCOCK Joseph Ives James Screen Luman Bidnell	3	1	5	2	145
† 2d Sandisfield	_____					168
† 2d Dover	_____					22
East-Hartford	ELIADA BLAKESLEY William Wallace			1		31
Canton	* JARED MILLS Ezra Cleavland					16
† Newtown	JOHN SHERMAN, <i>Elisha Cushman</i>					39
Hartford	Deacon John Bolles	3		3	5	92
1st Middletown	GEORGE PHIPPEN Deacon James Hart	5		1		88
† Winchester	_____					106
Sharon & Cornwall	HEZEKIAH WEST Samuel Adams			1	1	72
Amenia Town	_____	5	3		2	73
	<i>Calvin Phillio</i> Deacon John Garnsey Samuel Shepherd					
† Milton	_____					29
Berlin	ENOCH GREEN	3		3	1	28
North-East Town	ISAAC ALLERTON John Buttolph James Winchel	3				82
† Wethersfield	_____					38
North-Haven	JOSHUA BRADLEY Deacon Ward Johnson Lyman Todd Herman Roberson Benjamin Baldwin Jesse Bocket	13		1		53

†† *Brother Morse has moved to Suffield.*

6. Brethren from Sister Associations were invited to sit with us, exhibit their Letters and give information agreeably to their appointments.

7. From Saratoga, Minutes—no Messenger. From Sturbridge, Messenger, Spencer Alden, no Minutes. From Rensselaerville, Minutes—no Messenger.

8. Appointed the following Brethren, Messengers to Sister Associations, viz: To the Shafsbury, Brothers Morse and Talmage. To the New-York, Brother Philleo. To the Stonington, Brothers Babcock and Bolles. To the Otsego, Brother Bradley. To the Warwick, Brother West. To the Saratoga, Brothers Morse and Cleavland. To the Warren Brothers Blakesley and Phippen. To the Groton Conference, Brother Bolles. To the Sturbridge, Brother Morse. To the Rensselaerville Brother Winchell. To the Union, Brothers Philleo and Garnsey.

9. Voted, to open a correspondence with the Boston Association, and appointed Brothers Morse and Cushman our Messengers.

10. No Circular Letters being presented, Voted that Brother Cushman write one, and that Brothers Wildman, Phippen, Blacksley and Allerton, with the author, be a committee to examine it. Also, that the Corresponding Letter prepared by Brother Morse be referred to the same committee with the author.

11. Appointed Brother Wildman to write the Circular, and Brother Miller the Corresponding Letters for the next year.

12. Adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. Prayer by the Moderator.

13. Met according to adjournment. Prayer by the Moderator.

14. The Circular and Corresponding Letters were read and accepted.

15. Voted to hold our next Association at Suffield.

16. Voted that Brother Allerton preach the Introductory Sermon—in case of failure Brother Blakesley.

17. Missionary business. After a number of refreshing observations were made upon the importance of this good work; Voted that Brother Bradley prepare a small piece to be printed with our next minutes, exhibiting the state of this society since its formation. It is desired that the churches forward more money than usual, for printing the minutes.

18. Voted that the Ministers and Messengers call upon the several churches to which they respectively belong, for Missionary aid.

19. Voted that Brother Allerton be added to the number of the Trustees.

20. Voted that Brother Phippen superintend the printing of the minutes.

21. Received information, by their Messenger Brother Alden, from the Sturbridge Association, that, considering the calamitous situation of our country, they had recommended to the several churches, to hold a quarterly meeting for prayer. Voted we recommend the same to the several churches composing this Association—that commencing with the 2d Tuesday in October inst. they meet quarterly for prayer, during the distressed situation of our country, and at the expiration of war, they close with a day of Thanksgiving.

The business of the Association being completed, the Moderator closed with an affecting address, and solemn prayer.



CIRCULAR LETTER.



The MINISTERS and MESSENGERS of the DANBURY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, maintaining the doctrines of total Depravity, Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, eternal personal Election, the final perseverance of the Saints, the resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgement—to the several CHURCHES, they represent, send Christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED,

THE happiness resulting from christian society, animates and encourages every true and faithful soldier of the cross, to use his utmost exertions in promoting so delightful a union. But happiness is not the christian's only object. He is not a slave, but a son. The comfort of the christian is blended with his duty, and both conspire to exalt the name of the eternal God, and show forth his declarative glory: When therefore we address the church of Christ, and congratulate her on her relation to the heavenly world, we are struck with the display of that divine wisdom, in constituting a spiritual body whose happiness should consist in effecting the most important purposes.

We contemplate a city set on a hill, ornamented with the rich beauties of the Redeemer, and reflecting the light of divine truth, in the midst of a dark and benighted world.

The light of truth declares the strict requirements of God's holy law, develops the corruption of the human heart, divulges the secret snares and stratagems of the devil, and teaches the need of a Saviour. It unfolds in a measure, the joys of heaven, and points out the way from a state of wretchedness and woe, to a state of permanent felicity.

The accomplishment of purposes so important as these, may serve to enforce the injunction of our blessed Lord. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven."

A particular attention to this general precept, is the duty which in this our epistle, we would earnestly recommend. To enumerate all those duties, the performance of which is necessary in spreading the light of truth, is not at this time to be expected ; but permit us, dear brethren, to mention some of those which have hitherto been too much neglected.

If we would be instrumental in disseminating the principles of our glorious religion, and scattering the rays of gospel light, it is essentially necessary that we should have a knowledge of gospel truth ourselves, and hence the study of the scriptures becomes a duty of very great importance.— But however great its importance, it is too much neglected, and even by our dear brethren whose abilities render them capable of doing much good. We often complain of the shortness of time, and yet how often does our indolence declare that we have much more time than we find means to employ. Were we to spend more of our time in the pursuit of christian knowledge, we should be much better prepared to leave the shores of time ; and even the shortness of time itself, is a sufficient reason why it should be properly occupied.

The Psalmist delighted in the testimonies of God's word, and received satisfaction by meditating therein ; and is not the word of God equally as precious now ? Why then should we neglect the scriptures of divine truth ? or pass superficially over a field of instruction so useful and so delightful ? By neglecting the word of God, our minds become contracted, and thus our light becomes almost, if not entirely obscured, so that when for the time we ought to be teachers, we have need to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. Let us then study the scriptures with strict attention, that our light may shine and God be glorified.

A punctual attendance on public and social worship is also necessary in order that our light may shine. The neglect of this is more particularly prevalent where we are not favoured with the public administration of the Gospel. We are often led to excuse ourselves on this ground, and because we have no public teachers, we often take the liberty to neglect the public worship of God ; but we do well to remember, that the same spirit which would keep us from worship when we have no preacher, would lead us to put so much confidence in one whom we might desire, as to exclude him from an interest in our prayers ; in which case we should derive but little advantage. Were we faithful to attend the public worship of God, and ready to improve our gifts on all proper occasions, we should not only derive instruction and edification ourselves, but by our engagedness in our Master's cause, should evince to a gainsaying world, that the religion

of Jesus consists in power, and not merely in form ; and thus in a twofold manner our light would shine, and God be glorified.

In order to exhibit the light of the gospel, it is also necessary that we contribute of our substance for the support of gospel Missionaries, who take upon them the fatigue and labours of the wilderness, for the benefit of perishing souls, as well as for the stated administration at home. The pleasures of christian communion which we enjoy at home, seem to invite us to contribute as far as we have power, in granting the same blessings to the heathen world, where perishing souls are sitting in the region and shadow of death.— Come then dear Brethren, as you value the immortal soul, and the importance of truth, communicate of your substance, that gospel light may be spread and God be glorified.

Suffer one remark on the importance of the education of children. It is the prerogative of God to bestow his grace, but he has made it the duty of christians to diffuse the light of truth. Let it be an object then to instil into the minds of youth, the important principles of the truth of God, whilst they are susceptible of those impressions, more difficult to be made in future life.

Finally Brethren, that your light may shine, and that your souls may ever be led in the path of life and comfort, is our fervent prayer, whilst we gratefully acknowledge your attention to us, in affording us assurance of your resolution to press forward to the mark, which may God grant we may all obtain, through Jesus Christ—AMEN.



CORRESPONDING LETTER.



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

BELOVED BROTHERS,

AMONG the social blessings in the christian constellation, Friendship shines like a star of the first magnitude.

Friendship flowing from hearts united in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, and enlightened by the influences of the Holy Spirit, exhibits, in this dark world, a specimen of the union and fellowship enjoyed by the spirits of just men made perfect, in the world of light.

To cultivate the celestial principle, and to enjoy the fruit of it, for the glory of God, for our own edification, and the

benefit of others, is an object dear to our hearts, and a motive to maintain the agreeable correspondence we have enjoyed in times past.

Friendship which flows from the love of God shed abroad in the heart, contributes much to temporal felicity. It strengthens and exhilarates the mind, alleviates the sorrows of the heart, and renders us far more comfortable in days of adversity. Sorrows are lessened by being communicated to our friends, and joys are increased.

Some events of the present day seem to present obstacles to our mutual intercourse and correspondence; but those very events, together with the whole dispensation of Providence towards us, at the present crisis of our national affairs, call us to be more fervent and persevering in every christian duty.

God hath visited some of our towns and churches with refreshing showers of grace;—so that while we mourn the loss of some by death; and the departure of some from the faith; we rejoice in the ingathering of many to the fold of Christ.

In consideration of these things, we are ready to adopt the language of the Prophet—instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children.

Brethren, our hearts desire and prayer to God is, that he would direct us all in the way of righteousness, and build us up in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, bless us with the unity of the spirit here, and purify us for that society, where friendship and happiness will be perfect, in the presence of God and the Lamb forever.

Dear Brethren,

We earnestly request a continuance of your correspondence. You will perceive by our Minutes the state of the churches. No large additions have been made; but those who have been added, we hope will honor their professions. Praying that the gracious influence of the Great Head of the Church may rest upon you, we subscribe ourselves yours in Christ our LORD.

ASAHEL MORSE, *Moderator.*
JOSHUA BRADLEY, *Clerk.*