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Baptists. Virginia. Middle District Association, 1804.

. Minutes ... at Rice's Meeting House ... October, 1804.

Richmond, Courtey, [1804]. 8 pp.

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MINUTES

OF THE

**BAPTIST MIDDLE DISTRICT AS-
SOCIATION,**

HOLDEN AT

RICE'S MEETING HOUSE,

IN PRINCE-EDWARD COUNTY,

The second Saturday in October, 1804.



Richmond :

Printed by **JOHN COURTEY, Junior,**

MINUTES, &c.

ABOUT noon, brother James Sanders preached the introductory sermon, from *Rom. 1. 16.*

After divine service, read the letters sent to see who composed the association.

Churches.

Messengers.

1. *Towmahawk—William Flournoy, Edmund Lockett.*
2. *Skinquarter—Charles Forsee, Edward Bass,*
3. *Spring creek—Benjamin Watkins, Lundy Hopkins.*
4. *Salem—Leonard Nunnally.*
5. *Cubb creek—Bernard Todd, Sherrod Overstreet.*
6. *Cedar creek—William Sydnor, Jesse Moore.*
7. *Buckingham—Isaac Garrott.*
8. *Sandy creek—John Scurry, Zac. G. Leigh.*
9. *Union—Noah Flood, Thomas Whitlock.*
10. *Liberty—John Baldwin, William Harris.*
11. *Dinwiddie—Only a Letter.*
12. *Mountain creek—Armstead Miller, John Rowlet.*
13. *Tussekiah—William Ellis, Joel Johns.*
14. *Nottoway—John Boram.*
15. *Powhatan—Samuel Roper.*
16. *Appomattox—James Sanders, John Feilder.*
17. *Rice's—Abner Watkins, Owen Haskins.*
18. *Chesterfield—Eleazar Clay.*

After reading the letters, chose brother James Sanders moderator, who chose brother Benjamin Watkins clerk, and brother Bernard Todd assistant.

The moderator, clerk and assistant, appointed to arrange the business of the association, and to make report on Monday morning.

Brethren, Edmund Lockett and Lundy Hopkins,

chosen to receive the bounty and settle with the treasurer, and make report on Monday.

Brethren; Eleazar Clay, James Sanders and Benjamin Watkins, chosen to preach on the morrow, & that divine service begin half after ten o'clock, A. M.

Brother William Brame sent us a packet of minutes, from the several corresponding associations, for which we return our thanks.

On motion, agreed, that we adjourn to Monday morning 9 o'clock—Dismissed by prayer.

The LORD's DAY, was spent in public worship; a large audience attended, and we trust there were evidences of GOD's approbation.

MONDAY MORNING, Oct. 15th, 1804.

Met pursuant to adjournment, and after worship proceeded to business.

Ordered, That the messenger's names be called over.

The committee chosen to arrange the business of the association, report as follows, viz:—

1. Query, from Union church:—Is it scriptural to administer the Lord's supper with leaven bread?

2. Query, from Chesterfield church, respecting the division of the district—to be considered.

3. The circular letter to be called for.

4. The committee chosen to receive the bounty, and settle with the treasurer, to report.

5. A recommendation from the Ketoston association, to be considered.

6. The time and place of the next association.

Agreed, That the report be received, and committee discharged.

With regard to the query from Union church, It is agreed, that we refer it.

Query, from Chesterfield church, respecting the division of the district taken up, and after deliberation thereon, agreed, that the same be divided, and laid off according to the meets, bounds and names, as prescribed by the convention, holden at Nottoway meeting-house, on the 12th of May last.

The committee, chosen our last association, to write the circular, came forward and reported, and were discharged.

The committee chosen to receive the bounty and settle with the treasurer, reported, that they find in the hands of the treasurer, after the necessary appropriations for last year,

	£.10 - 4 - 3
Received from Spring creek,	3 - 0

£.10 - 7 - 3

Also received for brother William Brame, twenty-seven shillings, the same is deposited in the hands of the treasurer. The report received and committee discharged.

With regard to a recommendation from the Ketoc-ton association—Agreed, that twenty dollars be taken out of our fund, and deposited in the hands of brethren, Benjamin Watkins and Edmund Lockett, who are appointed a committee, to meet the committees of the respective associations, who may act and deliberate with them, on such a mode as may manifestly declare our respect to George Hay, who volunteered himself; and also to Philip N. Nicholas, attorneys at law, for their signal and zealous services, rendered not only to us, but to every friend of liberty, in advocating the suit in the Court of Appeals, respecting the sale of the Manchester Glebe Lands, in the county of Chesterfield.

Ordered, That 250 copies of our minutes be printed under the same direction as heretofore, and distributed in the same manner.

Agreed, That although a division of our district hath taken place at this session, yet, that we endeavour to keep up the unity of the spirit, as far as possible by visiting each other; and that we will at our respective associations appoint messengers to attend the other two sister associations.

After divine service, dismissed in order.

JAMES SANDERS, Moderator.

BENJAMIN WATKINS, Clk.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD,

WE have thought it fit in this our Circular Letter, to address you on the subject of brotherly love; ^a a subject, we conceive, not only important, but very interesting to Christians, which, if properly attended to, would produce a happy effect: as it is the heart and soul of all Christian societies, being the bond of perfectness; ^b and is that which distinguishes the disciples of Christ from all others, or from the world; for such having experienced the love of God in Christ, ^c is thereby disposed to love God, and he that loves him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. ^d But as we know it is not enough to embrace the religion of Jesus in theory only, or in a

(a) Rom. xii.—19.

(b) Gal. iii.—14.

(c) Rom. v.—5.

(d) 1. John v.—1.

mere speculative manner ; we would exhort you, Brethren, to see that you have the spirit of it, and that ye be governed by it's heavenly principles.

Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints,^e not only for its doctrines, which are in opposition to an unbelieving world, but for the exercise of it in your own hearts : This is the faith that worketh by love,^f and purifies the heart, and is productive of good works ; and that overcometh the world, &c.^g Love is the fulfilling of the law,^h and therefore includes our duty, both to God and our fellow creatures.ⁱ As this is the scope of the divine institutions, the language of the royal law is, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself :^j In complying with this, we are to exercise benevolence, friendship, and good will towards all men ; but to the Saints and people of God we should have a special regard.^k Man, considered as a social being, the most happy state he can be in, in this world, is that of Christian society, in which each member should feel his obligation to, and dependence on, his fellow member : striving together for the faith of the gospel,^l which includes all the rules and regulations of Jesus Christ, the great law-giver and head of his Church. And as this love worketh no ill to our neighbour,^m we ~~should~~ exhort you carefully to avoid all railing, evil speaking, and back biting, both among yourselves and all mankind. Strive to follow your Divine Master, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ;ⁿ render not evil for evil to any man, but ever follow that which is good.^o Remember that charity suffereth long and is kind :^p This love

(e) Jude—3.

(f) Gal. v.—6.

(g) 1 John v.—4.

(h) Rom. xiii.—10.

(a) 1 Thes. v.—15.

(i) Deut. vi.—5.

Lev. xix.—18.

Matt. xix.—19.

(k) Gal. vi.—10.

(l) Phil. i.—27.

(m) Rom. xiii.—10.

(n) 1 Peter ii.—23.

(p) 1 Cor. xiii.—4.

to God and his people is opposed to the love of the world.

We should therefore guard against the latter, and use all prudent means to cultivate the former : in doing which, let your supplications be frequent,^q and earnest. Give yourselves much to the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures ;^r and by no means forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.^s For in proportion to our negligence, so our love to each other cools, and an alienation insensibly creeps on.

We should therefore be very diligent in watching over ourselves and each other,^t admonishing of, and praying for each other : and striving to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.^u When we love the brethren, we can bear with them in their imperfections and frailties ; and although they may differ with us in opinion, yet we can exercise charity towards them in some respects ; for love covereth a multitude of faults,^v while the contrary spirit magnifies them, and makes mole-hills (as it were) appear like mountains. Now then as it is the nature and tendency of the love of God, to influence his people to love one another, so it is reasonable they should, being children of the same father ;^w having all embarked in the same common cause ; all tending to the same heaven, and all hope to dwell eternally together ! How unitedly then should they be engaged against the common foe, affording each his friendly aid, while in this unfriendly world.

(q) 1 Thes. v.—17. (t) Matt. xxiv.—42. (w) Gal. iii—26.

(r) John v.—39. (u) Eph. iv.—3.

(s) Heb. x.—25. (v) 1 Peter iv.—8.

This love in its nature and tendency is very different from party zeal, or party spirit: For when the Corinthians were divided, and were contending, the Apostle charged them with being carnal and walking as men.^x Again, the disciples saw one casting out devils in the name of Jesus, who followed not them, and they forbid him, but this conduct of theirs, did not meet with Christ's approbation, who said unto them forbid him not, for whosoever is not against us, is for us.^y And although we may not love all the ministers of Christ in the same degree, yet we are to love them, so far as they manifest themselves to be his ministers, by the piety of their lives, and the purity of their doctrines, and so to esteem them highly for their work sake. Again, we may not love all the people of God in the same degree, yet we are bound to love them as brethren, notwithstanding they may be called by different names, (at least) so far as they give evidence of their being the people of God. These things brethren, we submit to your serious consideration, hoping that the divine blessing may accompany them to all our hearts.—Amen.

(x) 1 Cor. iii.—3. (y) Mark ix.—38, 39, 40.