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**Baptists. Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Association, 1796.**

**Minutes ... at Philadelphia, October 4 ... 6th, 1796.**

**[ Philadelphia, 1796. ] 8 pp.**

**BrU copy.**

# MINUTES

OF THE

## Philadelphia Baptist Association,

HELD

At PHILADELPHIA, October 4th, 5th, & 6th, 1796.

TUESDAY, October 4th, 1796.

At 3 o'clock, P. M. Brother THOMAS USTICK preached the Introductory Sermon, from Rom. i. 15, 16. "*So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.*"

After Sermon business was opened with prayer by Brother USTICK, when Dr. SAMUEL JONES was chosen Moderator, and Brother BURGESS ALLISON, Clerk.

Letters were read from twenty-seven Churches.

N. B. Ministers names in *Capitals*. Licenced Preachers in *Italics*. Those marked \*, not present. From Churches marked †, no intelligence. Dashes denote no settled Minister.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Baptized.</i>	<i>Received by Letter.</i>	<i>Dismis'd by Letter.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Dublin,	SAMUEL JONES, D. D. Benjamin Dungan, Joseph Green, Joseph Evans.	3	7	1		2	70
Wilmington,	BENJAMIN BENNET.	1				5	140
	HENRY SMALLEY, A. M. David Elwell, Jeremiah Brooks.			4	1	4	117
	DAVID JONES, A. M. JENKIN DAVIDS, Jonathan Philips, Isaac Abram, Daniel Cornog.			2		4	63
	Carried over,	4	7	7	1	15	390

## Churches.

## Ministers and Messengers.

Brought forward.

Churches.	Ministers and Messengers.	Baptized.	Received by Letter.	Dismissed by Letter.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total.
Cape May †,	JOHN STANCLIFF*.	4	7	7	1	15	32
Hopewell,	{ JAMES EWING, Jared Sexton, David Stout.			5	1	3	47
Brandywine,	{ JOSHUA VAUGHAN, John Powell, Robert M <sup>c</sup> Coy.	1	2	3	1		141
Montgomery,	{ JOSHUA JONES, Charles Humphrics, Isaac Johnston, Silas Hough, Joseph Hubbs, Edward Pennington.	7	1				85
Kingwood,	GARNER HUNT.	2		2			2
Hights Town,	{ PETER WILSON, Nehemiah Die, Peter Job, Thomas Appleton.	8		14		4	27
Philadelphia,	{ THOMAS USTICK, A. M. WILLIAM ROGERS, D. D. Isaac Carlisle, George Ingles, John M <sup>c</sup> Leod, Benjamin Thaw, Joseph Keen, Nathaniel Davis.	19	17	2	4	3	117
Southampton,	{ THOS. MEMMINGER, A. M. Arthur Watts, Abel Marple, Elias Yerkes, jun.	6				1	87
† Knowlton,	DANIEL VAUGHAN*.						43
New Britain,	{ WILLIAM WHITE, Joseph Matthews, Edward Matthews, Joseph Dungan.	10					34
Salem,	{ ISAAC SKILLMAN, A. M. John Walker, Joseph Lloyd.	5	2	3		2	70
Dividing Creek,				1		4	70
New Mills,	{ Benjamin Hedger, David Galkill.	2	1	3	2	5	82
	Carried over,	64	30	40	9	17	157

*Churches.*

*Ministers and Messengers.*

Brought forward,

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	Baptized.	Received by Letter.	Dismissed by Letter.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total.
Konoloway,	<b>JOSEPH POWELL*</b>	64	30	40	9	37	1586
† Coram,	_____	4					34
Upper Freehold,	_____						30
† Pittsgrove,	_____					5	52
† Manahawkin,	_____						
Vincent,	<b>THOMAS FLEESON.</b>					2	19
Tuckahoe,	<b>PETER GROOM.</b>					1	25
London Tract,	<b>THOMAS FLEESON.</b>				1		37
Hill Town,	{ <b>JAMES McLAUGHLIN*</b> , Philip Miller, Enos Morris, Joshua Dungan.	6				1	104
+ Lower Smithfield,	<b>DAVID JANE*</b>						26
Jacobs Town,	{ <b>BURGISS ALLISON, A. M.</b> <b>WILLIAM STAUGHTON,</b> William Snowden.		2				61
+ Pitts Town,	_____						184
Marcus Hook,	<b>ELIPHAZ DAZEY*</b>	1		1			19
Roxbury,	{ John Levering, Michael Conrad, John Walraven.	2					47
Penns Manor	<b>ALEXANDER McGOWAN.</b>			1			26
Sideling Hill,	{ <b>THOMAS RUNYAN*</b> , John Occoman.	1					50
West Creek,	{ <b>PETER GROOM,</b> David Lore.	1				2	32
Shemokin,	<b>JOHN PATTEN.</b>	34	8			1	50
<b>Total.</b>		113	40	42	10	49	2332

Business closed with Prayer by the Moderator.

Adjourned until 9 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

[Sermon in the evening by Dr. Foster, from 2 Cor. xii. 10. For when I am weak, then I am strong.]

**WEDNESDAY, October 5th.**

Met pursuant to adjournment.

4. Business was opened with Prayer, by the Moderator.

5. A Church newly constituted at Shemokin, having made application to be admitted as a Member of this Association, was accordingly received.

6. Brother John Blackwell, having been appointed at the last Association to write the Circular Letter for the present year, but not having sent it forward; it is requested that at the next association he will give reasons for such omission.

7. Brother Staughton is requested to write a Circular Letter to accompany the Minutes.
8. Received Letters from the following Associations. Welsh Tract, with a Messenger;—Charleston, with their Minutes;—Warwick, with their Minutes;—New York, with their Minutes, by Doctor Foster as Messenger; and Stonington, with their Minutes.
9. A copy of the Charter for incorporating the Association, was brought forward by Dr. Samuel Jones, and read, and he appointed to proceed with all expedition in obtaining said Charter.
10. The Committee appointed, in Sect. 28, last years Minutes, to revise and publish Mr. Edwards's History of the Delaware Baptists, report, that they have omitted proceeding in the business, on account of a request from the Delaware Association that it might be postponed in order to rectify some mistakes.
11. A Letter being read, from a Committee of the New York Association, appointed to confer with us respecting a new Edition of the New Testament, wherein the terms of Baptism are proposed to be translated agreeably to their original import; this Association conclude to defer the same until next year for farther consideration.
- Concluded with Prayer by Doctor William Rogers.—Adjourned until 3 o'clock, P. M.

3 o'clock, P. M. Met pursuant to adjournment.

Business opened with Prayer by Brother Peter Wilson.

12. Brother Joshua Jones, from Lincoln in Old England, producing proofs of his having been Pastor of a Baptist Church there of the same faith and order with us, was invited to take a seat among us

13. The proposed amendments to the Catechism were brought under consideration, but for the present set aside.

14. Dr. Samuel Jones, to whom was referred, last year, the revision and amendment of our System of Discipline, having given satisfactory reasons why he had not yet brought forward the same, is appointed to go on in the business, and bring forward such amendments at next Association.

15. In answer to the Query from Dividing Creek, this Association think it inexpedient to admit Mr. German to administer the ordinances amongst them, inasmuch as those of his Society will not commune with us; and also, as it may be productive of confusion and disorder.

16. Brother Fleson to write the Letter, and, accompanied by Brother William White, to go as Messenger to the Delaware Association—Brethren Rogers and Wilson, as Messengers to that of New York. Brother Wilson to write the Letter. Brother Memminger to write to that of Warwick; and Brethren White and Groom to go as Messengers. Brother Rogers to write to that of Charleston—Brother White, to that of Stonington, and Brother Groom to Shaftesbury; to which he is also appointed a Messenger.

17. A Letter from the Warren Association, dated September 1794, was received and read, and Brother James Ewing appointed to write to them.

Brother Joshua Jones concluded by Prayer.—Adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock. [Sermon in the evening by Brother Skillman, from Isaiah xlv. 22. and Eph. ii. 28.]

**THURSDAY, October 6th.**

Met pursuant to adjournment.

Opened with Prayer by Brother Wilson.

18. Brother Skillman to preach the Introductory Sermon next year, and in case of failure Brother Burgess Allison.

19. Brother Memminger to write the Circular Letter.

20. Supplies for Dividing Creek.

Brother Hunt,	Last Lord's Day in November.
——— Memminger, 3d	——— in January.
——— Groom, 3d	——— in February.
——— M'Gowan, 11t	——— in May.
——— Farrell, 2d	——— in June.

21. The Church at Shemokin request their Sister Churches to assist them in erecting a Meeting-House. The Association, therefore, recommend it to the Churches to make collections for this purpose, and forward the same to Brother Utlick, in Philadelphia, as soon as possible, as the winter season is coming on, and the people are intirely destitute of a suitable place to worship in.

22. The Circular Letter, written by Brother Staughton, was brought forward, and read with approbation.

23. The Brethren appointed to write to our Corresponding Associations, brought forward their Letters, which were read and approved.

24. Brother Utlick is requested to superintend the printing of the Minutes, and to forward them to the respective Churches as soon as may be.

25. The Business of the Association closed with Prayer by the Moderator.

[Sermon in the evening by Brother Staughton.]

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## (CIRCULAR LETTER.)

The **MINISTERS** and **MESSENGERS** of the **BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**,  
held at **PHILADELPHIA**.

TO THE CHURCHES THEY REPRESENT, SEND CHRISTIAN SALUTATION.

*CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,*

**A**CCORDING to the good hand of our God upon us, we are again met in Association. With gratitude to him who is head over all things to the church, we mention, that the various letters we have received from the churches testify, that among them love and peace prevail, and that in like manner harmony has crowned our recent deliberations.

Accustomed annually to address you, and to derive the theme of our Letter from the succession of subjects in our Confession of Faith, we expected this year to have set before you the principles and pleasures of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience. Though in this expectation disappointed, we are still desirous

of pressing on your minds such reflections as shall be friendly to your advance in knowledge and virtue.

Not more from the present state of religion, than from the pious hints suggested in your Letters, our thoughts are turned to the prevalence of Infidelity.—With that regret and anxiety which every good man must feel when the godly man ceaseth, and when the wicked prevail, we observe crowds of unreflecting youths, pressing on to ruin, fascinated with systems which, though congenial with depravity, are at an infinite remove from holiness and truth. Our eyes, our ears, affect our hearts, while we perceive the sophistry admired which is pointed against the gospel of Christ, and the course of

thought and conversation, which tends to the advancement of guilt and confusion, applauded as fashionable and just.

To trace this evil to its proper source we must recur to the original depravity of man, but we perceive a less distant cause in the revolution of empire. Our God sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and guides its affairs as his infinite perfections direct, yet its vicissitudes are usually so connected that one event appears naturally to rise out of another. Europe has for ages been deluged in superstition, and even where the reformation had destroyed its servile fetters, among the professors of religion little of the power of godliness was visible.

We rejoice in the progress of civil liberty, because so intimately related to the liberty with which Christ has made us free; but we perceive that as it moves, papal superstition and protestant insensibility are brought to light.—While these are by their advocates termed religion, the infidel, with an air of plausibility, exclaims—*all religion is vain.*

Permit us, Christian Brethren, as such who watch for your souls, to guard your minds against the influence of this prevailing evil. In this unfriendly world, popular sentiments though evidently erroneous, sometimes produce an unhappy effect on the minds of such who are coming up out of the world. The unavoidable habits of society operating in conjunction with remaining depravity, too frequently give a tone to the thoughts and actions of believers, which is contrary to the simplicity that is in Christ.—Brethren, forgive the jealousy we feel, lest they produce this effect among you.

As an antidote to this evil, we affectionately exhort you to labor after an enlarged acquaintance with divine truth. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.—You have a reason of the hope that is in you, stand prepared, on every proper occasion to give it with meekness and fear.—While you explore the teaching of the Spirit of God, search the scriptures.—The religion of Jesus courts the investigation of all, but it has a special claim on the attention of the righteous. Ye are set as a defence of the gospel, the

sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, is put into your hands, be ambitious to use it with a happy dexterity.—Prompt and ingenious are the sons of infidelity in disseminating error; and shall the sons of God be inactive and unskilful in the support of truth?—Never do the triumphs of an infidel rise higher than when a man of God stands foiled before him.

But while we urge you to seek an increase of the knowledge of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and when duty invites, to appear as the advocates for evangelical piety, we beseech you scrupulously to banish a love of vain disputation. Aware of the invincible arguments in favor of the truth as it is in Jesus, and prone to mingle our personal interests with the subject we defend, we are in danger of disputing for the poor reward of victory.

Remember, Brethren, the religion we profess is of infinite moment; seriousness ought to attend all our labors to maintain its truth. If you attempt to defend the gospel with infidel wit and heroism, a wound will be received in the house of a friend: but when you appear in its defence with all the weight of eternal concerns on your minds, the circumstance, like the splendor on the countenance of Moses, will make a rebellious people tremble. It is acknowledged that the shafts of satire are sometimes projected with success against vice and error; but they more frequently fall pointless to the ground. The weapon is dangerous, and in the sacred pages little used. Every sentiment hath its natural influence. The tendency of infidelity is to produce ridicule and folly, while wisdom and seriousness are the offspring of religion. When we by folly and ridicule attempt to overturn popular errors, we give the wicked an easy triumph, by indulging in ourselves the unhappy influence, at the time we condemn the sentiment. But before a holy favor of truth, as before the incense of the altar in Bethel, the lifted arm of every opposing Jeroboam will be dried up.

But, Brethren, it is not enough that ye maintain the truth by argument: the purity of your walk and conversation will best demonstrate the sincerity and excellency of your faith.

Errors have for ages distracted the Christian Church; but they have generally originated in the ungodly lives of the professors of religion. The enemies of the cross blend together the gospel of Christ, and the lives of its subjects; and when believers sin, ascribe the iniquity to the gospel itself. At a time like the present, when the adversaries of truth are torturing their invention for new arguments against the cause which ought to be dearer to you than your lives, how ought ye to walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, that by well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

There is, Brethren, an awfulness in piety, before the display of which, the most hardened infidel is occasionally confounded. While your conversation is as becometh the gospel of Christ, assure yourselves, that though the ungodly outwardly laugh at and contemn you, they inwardly tremble and approve.

For nearly a century past shame, arising from derision, has been but little realised in the church: we have long sat peaceful and blest as under vines and fig-trees. But in the present day, by appearing as the friends of vital and experimental godliness, by determining, assisted by the Holy Spirit, to follow the Lamb of God, whithersoever he goeth, we must expect to have our ideas pitied as mistaken, and our affections derided as enthusiastic. But to suffer for well-doing is an honor; and while we consider shame for the sake of Jesus, not as an evil patiently to be borne, but as a mark of glory of which, like the apostles, we are accounted worthy, like them we shall rejoice in him.

When you enter the sanctuary of the Lord, or retire into your closets, and hold communion with your own hearts, and with the God of your salvation, the hard speeches of the wicked appear lighter than vanity; and while you reflect, that the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, and that base spirits of the world are chosen, to confound the mighty; for the aversion of the learned and polite in our day you will as easily account, as did the conduct of the Jews and Greeks, in the days of the apostles, in pronouncing the

preaching of the cross a stumbling block and foolishness. As the purity of the gospel is educible from the aversion of wicked men, so the impurity of infidel opinions is demonstrable from their passionate zeal for their diffusion.

From the earliest ages of time the world has had its course.—Lust, idolatry, persecution, and superstition have successively been as mighty streams on which thousands have been borne along to ruin. At present, infidelity prevails; but it is an evil, and every evil, like the frail body of man, has the principle of decay within itself. An infidel exhibits his sentiments, and considers them as a lamp to the nations. His actions testify it is the lamp of the wicked, and Heaven declares the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

While the nations rage and the earth is moved, ye who love the God of Israel and pray for the prosperity of Zion, like venerable Eli, when the Philistines were contending between Ebenezer and Aphek, may tremble for the ark of the Lord; but not like him shall ye sink under the distressing information, that the ark is taken—the kingdom of Jesus overthrown. Universal empire and permanent prosperity, are promised to the great Redeemer: of the increase of his dominion and peace there shall be no end. The present spread of infidelity, far from portending the destruction of Christianity, establishes its truths by fulfilling its predictions. The earth is waxing old like a garment, and like smoke, the heavens will shortly vanish away, all flesh is grass and the grass withereth, but the word of our God, which by the gospel is preached unto you, shall stand for ever. Banish christianity from the world, and what remains but guilt and death? But *this* is a living system, and must prevail till the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

When pursuing the interests of Zion, we are fellow workers with God. Do we pray for the coming of the Saviour's kingdom? Martyrs, at the foot of the altar, join our prayers. Do we groan? We groan with the creation, which travails for the redemption of the body of the righteous. Do we expect the period?



