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Baptists. Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Association, 1798.
Minutes ... at New Mills.... October 2d ... 4th, 1798.
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MINUTES

OF THE

Philadelphia Baptist Association,

HELD

At NEW MILLS, Burlington County, State of New Jersey,

October 2d, 3d, and 4th, 1798.

TUESDAY, October 2d, 1798.

1. **AT** 3 o'clock, P. M. Brother **BURGISS ALLISON**, agreeably to appointment last year, preached the Introductory Sermon from 2 *Corinthians* iv. 5. "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake."

2. After Sermon business was opened with prayer by Brother **WILLIAM ROGERS**, when Brother **DAVID JONES** was chosen Moderator, and Brother **BURGISS ALLISON**, Clerk.

3. Letters from twenty-five Churches were read.

N. B. Ministers names are in **CAPITALS**. Licenced Preachers in *Italics*. Those marked with an * were not present. From Churches marked thus † we received no intelligence. Dashes denote no settled Minister.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Baptized.</i>	<i>Received by Letter.</i>	<i>Dismissed by Letter.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Lower Dublin,	{ SAMUEL JONES, <i>Benjamin Dungan.</i>	—	5	—	—	1	74
† Middletown,	BENJAMIN BENNET*.	—	—	—	—	—	138
Cohansey,	{ HENRY SMALLEY, <i>Isaac Wheaton.</i>	—	—	—	—	3	105
Great Valley,	DAVID JONES.	1	—	1	—	1	63
† Cape May,	JOHN STANCLIFF*.	—	—	—	—	—	47
Hopewell,	{ JAMES EWING, <i>Paul Hill,</i> <i>Abraham Servis.</i>	17	1	9	1	—	128
	Carried over,	18	6	10	1	5	555

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Baptized.</i>	<i>Received by Letter.</i>	<i>Dismissed by Letter.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	Brought forward,	18	6	10	1	5	555
Brandywine,	{ JOSHUA VAUGHAN, William Simefon, Thomas Davis.	—	—	1	1	—	84
Montgomery,	{ JOSHUA JONES *, Charles Humphrey, Silas Hough.	—	1	—	—	—	28
Kingwood,	{ GARNER HUNT, John Robinson.	6	—	10	1	1	58
Hights Town,	{ PETER WILSON, Thomas Dye, Peter Job, John Blakeley.	12	2	1	—	4	290
Philadelphia,	{ THOMAS USTICK, WILLIAM ROGERS, <i>Isaac Carlile,</i> George Ingels, John M'Leod, Benjamin Thaw, George Allen.	No	re-	turn.	—	—	148
Southampton,	{ Thomas Folwell.	2	1	—	—	1	89
† Knowlton,	DANIEL VAUGHAN *.	—	—	—	—	—	43
New Britain,	{ WILLIAM WHITE, Edward Mathew.	—	1	—	—	1	36
Salem,	{ ISAAC SKILLMAN, John Walker, Sylvanus Shepard.	17	1	1	2	4	82
Dividing Creek,	—	—	—	—	—	5	65
New Mills,	{ ALEXANDER M'GOWAN, <i>Benjamin Hedger,</i> Henry Chambers, Jacob Woolston, Samuel Jones, Job Rogers.	13	1	1	1	1	102
Conoloway,	{ JOSEPH POWELL *, Ab-dnego Stephens.	6	1	—	—	1	40
† Coram,	—	—	—	—	—	—	30
Upper Freehold,	{ ANDREW HARPENDING, James Tapscott, David Burcalo *.	7	—	—	—	1	72
	Carried over,	81	14	24	6	24	1732

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Baptized.</i>	<i>Received by Letter.</i>	<i>Dismissed by Letter.</i>	<i>Excluded.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	Brought forward,	81	14	24	6	24	1732
† Pittsgrove,	_____	—	—	—	—	—	—
† Manahawkin,	_____	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vincent,	_____	—	1	1	—	1	23
Tuckahoe,	_____	2	—	—	—	—	29
London Tract,	THOMAS FLEESON.	—	—	—	—	—	39
Hill Town,	{ JAMES M'LAUGHLIN*, Philip Miller.	2	2	1	—	1	111
† Lower Smithfield,	DAVID JANE*.	—	—	—	—	—	26
Jacobs Town,	{ BURGESS ALLISON, WILLIAM STAUGHTON, William Snowden.	2	2	8	—	1	60
† Pitts Town,	_____	—	—	—	—	—	134
† Marcus Hook,	_____	—	—	—	—	—	19
Roxbury,	_____	2	1	—	—	—	49
Penns Manor,	{ _____ Caleb Jeffers.	—	—	6	1	1	18
† Sideling Hill,	THOMAS RUNYAN*.	—	—	—	—	—	50
West Creek,	{ PETER GROOM, Lemuel Edwards.	8	—	—	—	1	38
† Shemokin,	JOHN PAITEN*.	—	—	—	—	—	50
Amwell,	{ _____ John Carr, John Manners.	—	—	—	—	—	10
	Total.	97	20	40	7	29	394

Adjourned until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

WEDNESDAY, October 3d, 10 o'clock, A. M.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

4. A newly constituted Church at Amwell having addressed us by Letter requesting to be admitted into the Association, was accordingly received, by their Messengers, *John Carr* and *John Manners*.

5. Brother *William Burton*, from Nova Scotia, being present, was invited to take a seat with us.

6. Letters from the following corresponding Associations, with their Minutes, were received: viz. From New York, by *Reune Runyon*, as their Messenger; from Warwick, by their Messenger *John Caton*.—Also from Charleston and Warren.

7. Appointed the following Brethren to write to the different Associations: viz. *Rogers*, to the Charleston—*Utlick*, to the Warren—*Staughton*, to the New York—*Wilson*, to the Shaftsbury—*Smalley*, to the Warwick; and *Fleeson*, to the Delaware. And it is further understood, that those who cannot conveniently write during the session of the

Association, may write at their leisure, but in time to transmit the Letters to the respective Associations prior to their meeting; and present copies to the next Association.

8. The following Brethren are appointed as Messengers to the different Associations: viz. Wilson, to the New York—White and Groom, to the Shaftsbury and Warwick; and Vaughan, to the Delaware.

9. Brother Ustick brought forward the Letter which he had written to the Warren Association, agreeably to the 13th Section of last year's Minutes, which was approved.

10. The Church at Dividing Creek having applied for supplies, our Brethren Skillman, Smalley, Groom, and Stancliff, are requested to supply them at convenient seasons.

11. Received a Letter from the Church at Opeckon Creek, Berkeley County, Virginia, with reference to their Letter mentioned in the 6th Section of last year's Minutes: and also a statement of their difficulties.—The reading of the statement postponed until afternoon.—Adjourned until 2 o'clock, P. M.

2 o'clock, P. M. Met pursuant to Adjournment.

12. The Statement of the Church at Opeckon Creek, postponed until this afternoon, being read, it is the opinion of this Association, that the Ketockton Association be again written to on the subject, indicating that if we do not receive from them satisfactory reasons by our next Association, why said Church should not be received, we shall admit the Church. Brother Samuel Jones was accordingly appointed to write to said Association.

13. The Brethren appointed as a Council, in the 7th Section of our last year's Minutes, to investigate and give advice respecting certain difficulties subsisting in Brandywine Church, report: That they found the Church in a disagreeable situation; that party-spirit ran high; that they laboured after a reconciliation, but were not so happy as to succeed. Nevertheless, hoping that an accommodation may yet be brought about; therefore, appointed another Committee, consisting of our Brethren Skillman, Wilson, Ustick, M'Gowan, Smalley, and Carlisle to attend again upon the above business, on the first Wednesday in November next, at 10 o'clock, A. M. and make report at the ensuing Association.

14. The Circular Letter, written by Brother David Jones, was read; and Brethren Samuel Jones, Reune Runyan, Isaac Skillman, William Staughton, and Burgess Allison were appointed a Committee to revise the same in conjunction with the Author.

Adjourned until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

THURSDAY, October 4th, 10 o'clock, A. M.

Met pursuant to Adjournment.

15. The Committee appointed to revise the Circular Letter, brought it forward with amendments, which being read, it was approved.

16. The Letter to the New York Association, written by Brother Staughton, was read and approved.

17. The Committee appointed, in the 14th Section of last year's Minutes, to examine the Amendment of the Church Discipline, report: That having revised, and by a majority approved the same, they ordered it printed.

18. Brother Skillman is appointed to write the Circular Letter for the ensuing year, and left to his own discretion as to the Subject.

19. Brother Burton, who is now travelling to make collections from the Churches to assist in building a Meeting House in Halifax, Nova Scotia, at the request of the Association, read his Credentials, which were fully satisfactory: we therefore recommend to the Churches to assist him in so laudable an object.

20. Brother Memminger is appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon next year, and in case of failure Brother Staughton.

21. Brother Samuel Jones is requested to draw up a Map of the relative situations of all the Associations in the United States.

22. Brother Ustick is requested to superintend the Printing of the Minutes.

23. The Association is appointed to meet, on the first Tuesday in October, 1795, by divine permission, in Philadelphia; but in case any malignant disorder should prevail in that city, at the Great Valley.

Note. A particular return of the Collections for distant Churches is necessarily deferred until next Association, when it is expected the business will be concluded.

(CIRCULAR LETTER)

The MESSENGERS of the Churches of CHRIST belonging to the PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, met at NEW-MILLS, in the State of NEW-JERSEY,

TO THEIR RESPECTIVE CHURCHES, SEND GREETING.

BELIEVED BRETHREN,

WE have been once more prevented assembling in the city of Philadelphia by a dreadful visitation from God. Whatever may be the natural cause of this complaint, no doubt SIN is the procuring cause; nor can we reasonably expect a removal of the calamity without a suitable reformation among the inhabitants, for which we ought fervently to pray to God; and who knoweth but he may, in his great mercy, graciously answer our supplications.

The subject to which we shall call your attention this year is, "Religious worship and the Sabbath day," being the xxiid Chapter of our Confession of Faith.

That there is an eternal, almighty, and unsearchable God, the creator and upholder

of all things, the works of creation, as well as divine revelation, do clearly make appear; but the acceptable manner, in which we are to honour and worship him, is made known only by divine revelation, for which we should ever adore our God.

The object of all divine and religious worship, is the Godhead, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and these three personal distinctions are only one and the same Divine Being, from everlasting to everlasting the same, one living and true God, blessed for evermore.

That He alone is the object of religious worship, is evident from many texts of Holy Scripture, and in particular Matt. ix. 10. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him ONLY shalt thou serve."

All religious worship is to be performed in the *name* of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and men. To call on any other as mediator or intercessor, is contrary to divine revelation, and highly dishonourable to our adorable Redeemer; as well as shameful idolatry. Nor should such idolators ever be esteemed Christians, whatever they may believe, or profess to believe, on other subjects connected with Christianity. Some of the texts of Scripture to which we would refer you, on this subject, are the following; viz. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John xiv. 6. And in 13th verse it is said, "Whosoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5. "For through him, we both have an access, by one spirit unto the Father." Eph. ii. 18.

And whereas, by reason of the *fall*, all men are depraved, blind, and insensible of their spiritual wants, it is necessary to have the assistance of the Holy Spirit to prepare our hearts, and strengthen our souls to give glory and honour to God suitable to the divine nature. Our faith on this subject is founded on the following texts, with many others: viz. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications." Zechariah xii. 10. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii. 26. Many other passages of Scripture might be mentioned to the same purpose; but this subject is generally acknowledged by all who are worthy of the name of Christians. At the same time, we may confess with deep humility and sorrow of heart, that God has in a great measure suspended the powerful operations of his holy spirit in our churches. Oh

that it were with us as in years past! All our preaching, and all your hearing, will be to little purpose, without the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit.

We now proceed to observe a few things with respect to the time of performing religious worship. We are taught that God is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and that we should pray without ceasing; yet it is necessary to have, in the churches, fixed times for public worship. And it is to be wished that all Christians were unanimous on this subject; but there is little hope of this being the case, till we drop all traditions and traditional modes of speech; for these things will cause many mistakes.

The compilers of our Confession of Faith were desirous to use the same language with other Christians, as far as was thought consistent with a good conscience; and it may be, on this subject, they conformed more than can be supported by the Holy Scriptures, or any arguments justly drawn from them. Should we express ourselves in a manner different from them, we are in hopes it will give no offence to any of our Brethren; and we are rather persuaded the manner in which we shall treat this subject, will be generally acceptable if the arguments are calmly considered. We shall inquire into two points relative to the subject.

1. Whether the fourth command was moral or ceremonial?

2. By what authority Christians observe the first day of the week as a day of worship? It is not pretended that the word moral is used either in the Old or New Testament. By it, we understand those obligations, which in their nature are unalterable, and binding on all men; and by ceremonial, we are to understand such commands as were types or shadows of spiritual things, which might be abolished by the will of the legislator. Having premised these things, we proceed to shew that the fourth command was not moral, notwithstanding it is sometimes

placed with moral commands; but this is not always the case.

1. There is in the nature of things no reason why one day should be appropriated to religious worship more than another, for God is the same every day, and is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. The observance of one day more than another was instituted for certain reasons, and was binding on those to whom the will of God was made known; but not on the Gentiles, who were never charged with a breach of the Sabbath. The word Sabbath signifies Rest; and two reasons are given in Scripture why God enjoined it on the Jews. The first is that God finished the works of creation in six days, and rested the seventh. Ex. xx. 11. The second reason is the deliverance of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. When Moses repeated the law in Deut. v. 15. he said, "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." The Sabbath is repeatedly mentioned as a sign between God and the children of Israel throughout their generations, and seems limited to them.

For want of room, we must omit many arguments; but it may suffice to say that a ceremonial command is an institution of God to bring to mind some events past, or to come. Such was the passover, and such was the Jewish Sabbath. It brought to mind the finishing of the creation in six days, and God's resting the seventh, as well as the deliverance of the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt; and it alludes to that rest which a soul enjoys when enabled to believe in Christ.

The answer of our blessed Lord to the Pharisees accusing his disciples of breaking the Sabbath, plainly proves that he considered the Sabbath as a ceremonial command. We shall transcribe the passage and

make a few remarks. "And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shew bread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the Priests, and gave also to them that were with him? And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark ii. 25, 26, 27, 28. This passage affords an unanswerable proof in what light Christ considered the Sabbath; for had the Sabbath been a moral command, there would have been no propriety in quoting the breach of a ceremonial command as a parallel case.

We proceed to shew by what authority we keep the first day of the week as a day of Christian worship? And first, we would premise that the duties of the gospel differ in many respects from the law of Moses; for the law says, "Do this and you shall *live*;" but the gospel says, "LIVE, and as a child of God and joint heir with Christ, DO THIS, for his yoke is easy and his burden is light."

We do not say that there is any express command in the New Testament positively making it a duty to worship on the first day of the week; yet from the examples of the disciples, we have reason to believe that the disciples met by the authority of Christ; for some of his last words to his apostles were a solemn injunction, to do as he commanded, which are these; viz. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matth. xxviii. 20. If we admit that the Apostles were faithful, of which we can have no doubt, we must believe that their practice was conformable to the command of Christ; we would therefore refer you to their example, recorded in John xx. 19 and 26. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came

Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, peace be unto you.—And after eight days, again his disciples were within; and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, peace be unto you.” And in Acts xx. 7. “And upon the *first day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.” The historian mentions it as the practice of the church at Troas, and hence we find it as the known and established order of Christian churches in Galatia and Corinth, as appears from 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. And in John’s time, it seems to have obtained the name of the Lord’s day, Rev. i. 10. We must close this epistle in a few words respecting the manner in which this day of worship ought to be observed.

1. Let us avoid all worldly business as far as possible, that we may with singleness of heart wait upon God in all the appointed means of grace. In order to obtain this end, we should use our best endeavours to dismiss all our worldly affairs on the seventh day of the week, that we may be prepared for divine worship.

2. We should spend the morning of the Lord’s day in prayer or reading the Holy Scriptures, or other good books composed by the servants of Jesus Christ; and never allow small excuses to prevent our meeting with the disciples of Christ for divine wor-

ship. None can tell how much is lost by omissions of duty. It is good to wait on the Lord, for he walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and sits as a refiner or purifier of his people. From the apostle’s words in Heb. x. 25. it seems some were faulty in his days, and forsook the assembling together, a sure sign of backsliding of heart. Think not the duties of the day ended when you have attended public worship; but make a good improvement of time, for it is very precious. Therefore redeem the time by doubling your diligence.

Be not conformed to the vain customs of the present age in paying or receiving unprofitable visits on the Lord’s day, for this will tend to destroy the power of religion.

From the arguments above, we may justly infer, that the religious observance of the Lord’s day for divine worship, is warranted by the examples of the apostles and churches in their days. Consequently we have sufficient grounds to believe that it was by the authority of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the head of his church and lawgiver to the body.

And now dear Brethren, we commend you to God and the word of his grace, and remain your brethren in the gospel of Christ.

By order of the Association,
DAVID JONES, Moderator.
BURGISS ALLISON, Clerk.

The following BOOKS for sale at No. 79, North Third Street, PHILADELPHIA.

BACKUS’ History, 3 vols. 8vo. or 3d volume singly—Booth’s Reign of Grace; ditto Glad Tidings—Dr. Fuller’s Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared—Baptist Confession of Faith and Catechism—New Treatise of Church Discipline, by Rev. Dr. Samuel Jones—Psalms and Hymns—Bibles—Testaments, and a variety of other books.

N. B. Volumes I, II, and III of Mosheim’s Church History are ready for the subscribers; and volume IV. will probably be finished in five or six weeks. This work has partly been delayed in consequence of the calamitous visitations on our city—The Editors flatter themselves, however, that they will soon be enabled to bring this excellent work to a conclusion.

[WARMINSTER, BUCKS COUNTY, PRINTED BY STEPHEN C. USTICK, 1798.]