

36295

Baptists. Vermont. Shaftsbury Association, 1799.

Minutes . . . June 5th & 6th, 1799.

Pittsfield, Mass., Smith, 1799. 12 pp.

AAS copy.

14
187-100
M: N

OF THE

Shaftsbury

[Baptist]

ASSOCIATION;

HOLDEN AT ELDER NILES'S MEETING HOUSE
JUNE, 5th & 6th 1799.

Together with their Circular & Corresponding
LETTERS.

PITTSFIELD:

PRINTED BY CHESTER SMITH,
FOR THE ASSOCIATION.



1799.

• M I N U T E S, &c.

JUNE, 5th 1799.

1 ACCORDING to appointment, the Association was opened by a Discourse from Rom. II, 7; delivered by Elder *Isaac Webb*.

2 Elder *Samuel Rogers* was chosen Moderator, and Elder *Edward Barber* was appointed Clerk.

3 The Letters from the Churches were read, and the following lists taken of the Messengers, Additions, Dismissions, Excommunications, Deaths and present numbers in the Churches.

Churches.	Messengers.	Ad.	Dis.	Ex.	Dead.	No.
Botts-Kill.	{ <i>Edward Barber</i> , <i>Pardon Telft</i> ,	13	2	3	3	21 ⁰
Ballstown, *						50
Cambridge.	{ <i>Israel Crow</i> , <i>Ichabod Cross</i> , <i>John Centor</i> ,					48
1 Canaan.	{ <i>Ellice Bromley</i> , <i>John Beebe</i> ,	3	3			34
2 Canaan.	{ <i>Elisha Barns</i> , <i>Daniel Rowley</i> ,				1	32
Chatham.	{ <i>William Flint</i> , <i>Job Champion</i> ,	6	0	2	1	46
1 Cheshire.	{ <i>Peter Werden</i> , <i>Stephen Carpenter</i> , <i>Aaron Bowen</i> ,	0	23	0	0	54
3 Cheshire.	{ * <i>Nathan Mason</i> , * <i>Josiah Goddard</i> , <i>John Leland</i> ,	0	0	0	0	190
Chesterfield.	{ <i>Daniel Cooman</i> , <i>Amos Pettibone</i> , <i>Ebenezer Young</i> ,	27	4	2	2	70
Clifton Park.	{ <i>Noah Biffel</i> , <i>Nathaniel Upham</i> ,	6	0	0	0	36
1 Galway.	<i>Joseph Crow</i> ,	0	0	1	0	9
2 Galway.	<i>James Greenfield</i>	4	3	9	1	66
Granvill. †						18

Churches.	Messengers.	Ad.	Dis.	Ex.	Dead.	No.
G. Barrington,	{ Jeduthan Gray, Daniel Reynolds, Peter Orcutt, Joshua Millard, Josiah W. Brown,	24	0	2	2	111
1 Greenfield. †						92
2 Greenfield.	{ Amos Rogers, Charles Dake,	5	5	2	0	62
Hancock.	* Clark Rogers,					42
1 Hartford.	{ Amasa Brown, Ezekiel Whitford, Henry Mattison, Aaron Smith.	18	2	3	0	326
2 Hartford,	* Gamaliel Barns,					32
1 Hilldale,	{ Abel Brown, William Roe,	32	1	0	0	103
2 Hilldale,	{ Amos Hutcheson, Jacob Raymond,	14	1	3	0	55
Mapletown,	{ Samuel Rogers, Amasa Kinyon,	21	2	1	1	57
Mayfield,	{ Ezekiah Gorton, David Gaston, Robert Rion,	16	0	1	0	50
1 Milton †						50
2 Milton,	{ Elisha Langworthy William Stillwill,	74	3	6	0	94
Northumberland,	Calvin Hulbert,	16	0	0	0	67
Partridgefield,	{ Ebenezer Smith, Joshua Jackson, Isaac Tenny, Lemuel Covell,	29	0	0	0	47
1 Pittstown	{ Isaac Webb, Smith Route,	0	1	3	1	86
2 Pittstown, †	* Stephen Hunt,					48
1 Providence, †	* Jonathan Finch,					59
2 Providence, †						54
Pownal, †	* Caleb Nichols					131
Sandsfield,	{ Jesse Morey, Jesse Hartwell, Asahel Morse,	76	2	0	0	162
1 Saratoga, †						54
2 Saratoga, †						31
Savoy,	{ Nathan Haskins, William Ingram,					32

Schoedack,	{	Stephen Olmstead,					
		Daniel Van Coots, 17	2	5	0	12	
		John Drew,					
		Hector Robertson.					
1 Shaftsbury		Amaziah Martin, 73	3	1	0	62	
2 Shaftsbury		James Harrington, 15	5	0	0	36	
		Caleb Blood					
4 Shaftsbury,		Jeremiah Clark, 171	2	4	0	33	
		Peter Wright,					
		Justus Hull,					
1 Stephentown,		James Green,					
		Walter Rhodes, 21	2	2	1	16	
		Joseph Lee,					
		Benjamin Rogers,					
		Paul Himes.					
		Robert Niles,					
2 Stephentown,		Edward Carr,					
		Justus Goodrich,					
		Jesse Goodrich, 10	1	0	0	68	
		Arven Wood,					
Stillwater,†		*Lemuel Powers,				224	
Thurman or Chester,		Jehiel Fox, 34	1	3	0	87	
		Eber Moffit,					
West-Stockbridge,		Deacon Wilton, 2	5	1	1	77	
		Aaron Cady,					
		Matthew Dunning,					
Williamstown,		Joseph Birchard,				18	
		Elijah Rich,					
Kingsborough,		William Troop,				32	

Total 732 79 46 18 46

N. B. Cambridge and Kingsborough Churches were received into Fellowship at this session.

Adjourned until tomorrow Morning, 8 o'clock.

JUNE 6th.

Met according to adjournment; and Elder Hulbert preached a Sermon from 1 COR. IV. 7. After which the Association proceeded to business.

4. A Letter and Minutes came from the Danbury Association, by the hands of their Messengers Balden, Wadsworth and West

5. Received a Letter and Minutes from the Woodstock Association.

6. Received a Letter and Minutes from the Leyden Association, by the hand of their Messenger, Elder *Smith*.

7. Likewise from the Osego Association, received a Letter and Minutes by their Messenger, *Emanuel Northrop*.

8. Also a Letter and Minutes from the Philadelphia Association, by Elder *Peter Groom*.

9. By the hands of Brother Brame, received Minutes from the Southard Associations, viz. Georgia, Charlestown, Newse, Baptist General Committee, Portsmouth, Middle-District, Tar-River, Dover, Culpepper, Goschen, Roanoke, Ketodion, and Baltimore.

10. Inasmuch as the Vermont Association has fallen into two parties, and each of those parties sent Messengers to us, claiming a right to be received as the Delegates of *Vermont Association*, with which we formerly corresponded : Agreed, that this Association does not wish to hurt the feelings of either party or any way intimate that we do not fellowship them as Christian Brethren and Churches, but declare that we have fellowship with them as such ; but as we cannot receive the Delegates of either party, without supporting their claim, we think it most advisable not to receive any of them, in their official capacity ; but wish to exercise every degree of Christian love to them, and request all them to take seats among us, in the capacity of individuals.

11. From Ranslaerville Association a Messenger came, in order to join in fellowship ; but for want of more information and acquaintance, it was postponed for the present ; and appointed Elders *Hull, Cray, Cornel* and *Barns* to visit them at their next meeting, which will take place the 3d Wednesday in October next, at the House of Elder *Josiah Baker*, of Ranselaerville, Elder *John Leland* to prepare a Letter for said Association, to be sent by the Messengers, who are to report next Association.

12. The Circular Letter was called for and read ; but not giving general satisfaction, Elders *Leland* and *Covell* were appointed to prepare one.

13. The Corresponding Letter prepared by Elder *Cornel* was read and approved.

Adjourned for one hour and an half.

Met according to adjournment.

14. Some suggestions in the Letters from Mapletown and Pittstown respecting the power of an Association, occasioned the following declaration :

The Association take this opportunity of declaring their sentiment ; that it is gospelwise for the Association, whenever they receive official information that any Church in the Union has fallen from the faith and practice of the Gospel, that the Association may and ought to withdraw their fellow-

ship from such Church as fully and publicly, as they formed fellowship with them at first.

15. Appointed a Committee of Elders *Hull, Crow, Rogers, Barber, Hulbert, Olmstead* and *Niles* to visit the 2d Church in Greenfield, meet a Council, and attend on some matters of difficulty now existing among them; and report at the next Association

16. The query from last year's Minutes, for dividing the Association, is postponed for the present.

17. The Circular Letter prepared by Elder *Covell* was read and approved.

18. Appointed Messengers to the Sister Associations as follows:

To Philadelphia, Assn. Elder *Leland*.

To New-York, do. Elder *Webb*.

To Stonington, do. Elders *Groton* and *Bramley*,

To Danbury, do. Elders *Gray* and *Brown*.

To Woodstock, do. Elders *I Crow* and *Br Centor*.

To Leyden, do. Elders *Smith, Vining, Crow & Haskins*.

To Otiego, do. Elders *Covell, J Crow* and *Olmstead*.

19. One of the Committee appointed last year to visit Wallington Church, reported that they found no Church there in Gospel travail. Voted to leave their names out of the Minutes.

20. A similar Committee reported that they visited the 3d Church in Shaftsbury; that said Church had been very low and inactive, but that they have now arisen to make good their standing.

21. A like Committee sent to visit Norway Church, reported that difficulties still exist among them, whereupon the Association appointed Elders *Cornel, Blood* and *Covell* to visit them again.

22. Supplies for the 2d Church in Hillsdale.

Elder *Olmstead* first Sunday in July.

Morse second do. do.

Smith last do. do.

Hartwell first do. September.

Niles second do. do.

Crow last do. January.

J. Crow last do. February

23. Elder *Barber* is to write the Circular Letter for next year, and Elder *Abel Brown* the Corresponding Letter.

24. The next Association is to be at Elder *CALEB BLOOD*'s Meeting-House, in Shaftsbury, the first Wednesday in June next; beginning at 2 o'clock P. M. Elder *Justus Hall* to preach the introductory Sermon, but in case of failure, Elder *John Leland*.



CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Elders and Brethren of the Shaftsbury Association, halden at Stephentown, the 5th and 6th of June 1799: To the Churches whom they Represent, send Greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN,

BY the good hand of our God upon us, we have been preserved another year, and have had another social interview together. The good news which we have had from several of the Churches of our Union, has had the cordial effect upon our hearts, that cold water has upon the poor weary thially traveller. It is matter of consolation to us, that the Kingdom of the despised Nazarine is flourishing in any part of our apostate world. O, that we might see a more universal display of the all-conquering power of Sovereign grace in the conversion of sinners throughout the habitable part, of the Earth: In short, our souls, we trust, are longing to see the final downfall of Antichrist's Kingdom, and to see the Kingdom of Prince Immanuel extended to the earth's remotest bounds. We have, however, had the melancholy news from some of our Churches, that it is a time of declension among them; but we would encourage those who *sit in darkness and have no light, to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God.* Dear Brethren, while your souls are flaming with holy emotions, in seeing and feeling the glorious work of Jehovah, and while *our* hearts are enraptured with the joyful tidings; permit us, as those who wish to watch for the good of your souls, as well as for the honor of our Master, to suggest a few thoughts to you upon the importance of maintaining a close walk with God, while sojourning here below.

And *first*, As the effects of true religion in the heart are real and unfeigned love to the Divine Character, and the most voluntary and cordial attachment to the dear Redeemer and his cause, in this sinning world; it therefore is of the utmost importance that we act in every department of life, in such a manner as to demonstrate our real complacence in a holy God, and our hearty submission to his Government.

Secondly, There is no way that we can evince to the Saints that we love God; and consequently no way that we

can enjoy their Fellowship, unless we live a life devoted to the practice of Religion, "*By their Fruits ye shall know them. Men do not gather fruits from Thorns, nor figs from Thistles*" Therefore if we would rejoice the hearts of the righteous and enjoy their fellowship, we must live our religion.

Thirdly, We cannot demonstrate to an opposing world the realities of Religion, unless we adhere strictly to the great duties of *doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God*. When professors of Religion grow remiss in their duty, instead of putting to silence the ignorance of foolish men, they weaken the hands and sadden the hearts of all God's faithful Children; but the wound, perhaps, affects no class so much as it does the Ministers of the Gospel. How can a Minister hold up his head before an ungodly race of Infidels, who deny the blessed truths of the Gospel, and say Religion is nothing but a mere trick of State—a holy Fraud, peculiar to the sacerdotal tribe; invented and improved to get money, and indulge themselves in idleness, while he sees those who profess to believe in Religion, and boast of high attainments therein, living in sin, in the neglect of duty, and in direct opposition to what he feels constrained in his soul to declare to them from the Pulpit. How must a faithful Minister feel, when declaring from the Pulpit those awful truths, which cause Infernal Spirits to tremble, to see numbers in the assembly laughing and tickling, and knows that the objects of their levity are sitting in his presence, in the character of Brethren in the Lord, while their lives and conversation bespeak them the lovers of Vanity, or something of a worldly nature, more than lovers of God. Oh! how painful must a sight like the above be to any true Minister of Jesus Christ! And yet we fear many of them often have the heart-rending spectacle presented to their views; and we really fear that much of the leanness of soul, and want of success in preaching, complained of by preachers, & much of the coldness and declension complained of by Churches is owing to the want of maintaining a close walk with God.

Fourthly, Our own comfort will be diminished in proportion as we backslide: It is the willing and the obedient soul who has the promise of eating the good of the Land: Hear what the life of truth says, "*If a man love me he will keep my words and my Father will love him, and we will come and take up our abode with him.*" Oh! what words are these; the triune God dwelling with a poor, breathing Particle on this terrestrial Globe. The example and testimony of all the primitive Saints, prove that the happiness of the soul is inseparably connected with obedience to God; and the experience of every true christian corroborates the important truth.

From the few hints suggested above, you may see, Dear Brethren, of how much importance it is, that we, not only profess, but live Religion. God, who has set his glory above the Heavens, requires us to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his: He also, in infinite wisdom, has so connected our happiness with our duty, that while we are acting with the purest motives for the glory of God, we are, at the same time, pursuing our own happiness. Oh! then let us quit ourselves like men and be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Let us take to ourselves the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against all the wiles of the Devil: Let us remember the honor of the cause, which we profess to live, is deeply interested in our living our Religion: Let us evince to the world that the glorious work, of which we are making our boast in the Lord, is indeed the work of God. We have seen the enemy in some good measure baffled, and his forces somewhat scattered; but remember, Brethren, the Canaanites are not all dead; there are many of them lurking not only around but within us; the Devil will rally his legions again, and perhaps old Incredibility at the head of them: Though Satan may continue fallen awhile, like a wild Bull in a net, he will rave and rage by and by like a roaring Lion: Though you may now feel joyful, yet by and by your lusts will rise, your pride will swell, temptations will rise and pour upon you like a torrent.

We do not say these things to damp the joyful, pious feelings of your hearts; but that you may remember that Satan desires to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; and that the remembrance thereof may make you watch and pray, and above all, look to the great Captain of your Salvation, be always diffident in yourselves and dependent on God, keep humble, walk softly and be patient. And may the God of all grace stablish you and build you up in every good word and work.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Shaftsbury Association, to the Corresponding Associations, sendeth Christian Salutation.

Beloved in Christ our Lord,

THROUGH the goodness of God, another of our long wished for anniversary Meetings has come, which gives us an opportunity of addressing you; and it is with joy we have blessed news to communicate, that large additions have been made to a number of our churches: The cords of Zion are lengthened and her stakes are strengthened: The Prophecies and promises of Christ are fast fulfilling—his work is before him, and he will reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. But while our hearts are bursting forth in songs, that the wilderness buds and blossoms as the rose, and the desert is become a fruitful field in many places; we are checked with heavy tidings from other of our churches, that a great declension has taken place among them, thro' the baneful influence of the honours of the world, the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches; so that our cup is mingled with joy and grief:—Joy, to hear of the outpouring of God's spirit in the conversion of sinners; being assured that all things work together for good, to them that love God, who are called according to his purpose; knowing that such are built on that rock, against which the gates of Hell shall never prevail:—GRIEF, to find that any should forsake their first Love—be hindered in their heavenly race and wound the heart and hands of Christ in the house of his friends; but while we rejoice with those that rejoice—weep with those that weep and mourn over those that are fallen; we have this to comfort us, that religion has

gained much ground among us, the year past; blessed be God. Now, dear bretheren, we desire to continue our correspondence with you, that we may know of you, how the cause of truth prevails among your churches; and our sincere prayers are, that the enemies of Christ may bow before his truth, the flood of errors be dried up and the king of glory reign triumphantly thro' the earth.

With pleasure we have received Minutes, Letters, and Messengers from several of our Sister Associations, and wish to return the tokens of Love and Friendship: and may the Lord preserve us all from every evil and bring us all to his heavenly kingdom.

By order of the Association,

SAMUEL ROGERS Modr.

Attest, EDWARD BARBER Clk.