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Baptists. Connecticut. Stonington Association, 1801.

Minutes ... at Groton October ... 1801.

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MINUTES

OF THE

STONINGTON

ASSOCIATION

HELD AT GROTON,

OCTOBER 21 and 22

1801.

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NORWICH:

Printed by STERRY and PORTER.

1801.

M I N U T E S, &c.

TUESDAY October, 21.

THE Elders and messengers of the several churches met at Eld. John G. Whitman's Meeting-house in Groton.

1. Brother Bradley delivered an introductory sermon from Luke xvi. 31.

2. Made choice of brother Amos Wells, moderator, and brother John Sterry, clerk.

3. Letters from the several churches were then read, and the following account taken, of the number added, dismissed, excluded, and that have died the year past.

N. B. The names of the ordained ministers are in Roman letters. Those with this mark † were not present. From churches marked thus* we had no letter. Vacant churches distinguished by a dash——

<i>Churches</i>	<i>Ministers and messengers.</i>	Added	Dis.	Exclu.	Dead	Numb.
1st Stonington	†Peleg Randal Jabez Gallop Amos Brown Elias Palmer	9				182
2d Stonington	Simeon Brown Beriah Lewis Thomas Wells Asber Miller Asa Spaulding	2		13		59
Groton	John G. Whitman Benadam Gallop		1		3	220
Saybrook	——— Benj. Watrous Michael Spencer			1		56
Exeter	——— Pardon Tillinghast		2	2	1	199
Richmond formerly S. Kingston*	———					64
W. Greenwich*	———					107
1st Colchester	——— Asa Randal Jabez Hough	2	3			67
2d Colchester	——— Asa Willcox Eben. Rogers James Rogers	1	1		1	42

		Added.	Dit.	Exclu.	Dead.	Numb.
Richmond	<u>Alpheus Rogers</u>					27
Hampton	David Clark Abel Palmer Stephen Webb Asa Bennet	5	1	3		99
Montville	Reubin Palmer Joseph Allen Jabez Stebbins Samuel Bolles Eben. Dart Elkanah Comstock	8	2	2	1	102
1st Chatham	<u>Eber. Harris</u>	1		10	1	57
2d Woodstock	Amos Wells Robert Baxter David Bolles Oliver Barret	93				159
2d Chatham	<u>Constant Welch</u> George Gates Samuel Arnold	2		3	1	101
New London	Zadock Darrow George Atwell Charles Brown			5	3	192
E. Haddam	Simeon Dickinson Jesiah Hungerford Jesiah Lyon	4				55
Plainfield	Nathaniel Cole Thomas Smith Fincks Mason Caleb Hall Benj. Fuller					63
Killingly	Peter Rogers Nicholas Smith	51			1	114
Thomson	Parson Crosby Joseph Town	35			1	78
S. Kingston	Benj. Wait Caleb Tift Enoch Stedman					25
2d Ashford	John Wrathbun, Roswell Brown William Snell jr.				1	54
	Total.	200	11	38	13	2122

4. Received letters from the following Associations, viz. From the Warren Association, a letter and minutes, by their messengers, brethren Joshua Bradley and Robert Stanton. From the Danbury Association, no letter; messengers, brethren Ephraim Robins and Daniel Bestor. From the Groton Conference, a letter and minutes by their messengers, brethren Jason Lee and Silas Burrows. From the New York, a letter and minutes. From the Shaftsbury, a letter and minutes.

5 Brother Nehemiah Dodge having failed of preparing the Corresponding letter, appointed brethren John Wrathbun, Joshua Bradley and Amos Wells a committee to write the same and to examine the circular letter.

6. Adjourned till to morrow morning, 9 o'clock, at the meeting-house

Public worship this evening in several places in the vicinity.

WEDNESDAY, October 21.

7. Met according to adjournment at the meeting house. Prayer by the moderator.

8. Invited brother Robins and others to sit with us in the Association.

9 The Circular and Corresponding letters were read and accepted.

10 Voted that Brother John G. Whitman write the Circular Letter, and Brother Asa Willcox the Corresponding Letter for next year.

11 Voted that Brethren Constant Welch, John G. Whitman, George Atwell be messengers to the Danbury Association; Brethren Ephraim Robins David Bolles Messengers to the Shaftsbury; Brethren Peter Rogers & Abel Palmer to the Warren; Brethren Reubin Palmer, Parson Crosby, and John G. Whitman to the Groton Conference, Brethren Asa Willcox and Joshua Bradley to the New York.

12. Appointed Brethren Ephraim Robins, Stephen S. Nelson, Daniel Bestor, John Hastings and David Bolles jun. a committee to superintend a Petition of the Freemen of this State to the General Assembly of the same.

13. Voted that Brother John Sterry be appointed to superintend the printing of the minutes.

14. Voted that the Clerk forward the minutes to the Philadelphia Association.

15 Voted that our next annual Association be held at Elder Nathaniel Cole's meeting-house in Plainfield, on the third tuesday in October 1852.

Brother Amos Wells delivered a concluding discourse from Matt. x, 7.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The ELDERS and MESSENGERS of the Stonington Baptist Association, convened at Groton October, 20 and 21, 1801, to the several churches whom they represent, send greeting,

BRETHREN, BELOVED IN THE LORD.

THROUGH the tender mercies of our God, we have been indulged with another anniversary interview, and while we have been favored to hear the joyful tidings from various parts, of the enlargements of Zion's borders, the conquests of victorious grace, we have had occasion to adapt the language of rejoicing Israel on the banks of deliverance. The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath be thrown into the sea. But dear brethren, while we rejoice and are glad at the triumphs of grace abroad, we must watch our own hearts, and see that we have some cause of rejoicing in ourselves, as well as in, or on the account of others. In order for this, we find it necessary to attend to practical Godliness. You will suffer us therefore, to address you at this time on the importance of daily, or family religion, as without this we are not well prepared to rejoice in ourselves or others. By daily, or family religion, we mean a daily devotedness to God and his cause, in the place where we dwell, and the station which we fill. We find the sum of this religion expressed in a few words, by the great apostle to his Ephesian brethren, vi, chap. and to the Colossians, iii chap. beginning at the 18th verse; here we find husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, and adding the first verse of the next chap. we have the business & duty of each character in substance expressed, and not only expressed, but solemnly enjoined on them. To enlarge on the duty and business of each of these characters, cannot be expected in a small letter, but a few thoughts on the duty and business of heads of families, we think at this time will not be improper. When we consider what relation we stand in to eternity and our accountability to God for our conduct, it is of real importance that heads of families consider the obligation they are under to bring up those under their care, in the fear, nurture and admonition of the Lord. Every head of a family (however they may think of themselves) fill a high station in life: they have a family under their care and government; and they are under obligation to provide suitably, and to govern discreetly; first provide. *Parents lay up for children, not children for parents.* Parents that really have the welfare of the souls of their families at heart, will strive more to lay up for

them treasure in heaven than to lay up for them perishable substance on earth; certainly the soul is of more importance than the body. If in this Respect we seek first the kingdom of God and the riches thereof, no doubt but necessary outward things will be added. In attending to our families in this way, we may say much is required of us and we have little or nothing to give; but it is not for us to excuse ourselves on the account of our poverty, God requires it of us; and altho' it is utterly impossible for us *efficiently* to lay up treasure in heaven, or on earth for our families, yet it is certainly possible that both may be done *instrumentally*: and what encouragement have we to strive, since God invitingly commands. Have we not received the earnest of our inheritance that is in heaven? The evidence of which implies faith, hope, love, and obedience; if so, then let us be faithful in our families, indulge hope in our souls, love God and our brethren, be obedient in our lives, and we shall lay up for our families, and do good to others. 2d We must govern with discretion; in order to govern others, we must govern ourselves, we constantly need the spirit and temper of Jesus, that feeling ourselves under law to Christ, we may be able to administer good and wholesome rules and orders in our families. In order for all this to be attended to, we must pray much, must lodge many prayers before the throne of grace, must watch and pray, pray without ceasing. There is one great privilege as well as a solemn duty, that families, christian heads of families are indulged with, in our highly favored land, that of family worship: we are not confined to private devotion or secret prayer, but may call our families together, morning and evening, or any other time when we think it convenient, and unite together in supplicating the throne of grace. In this way, the parent or master may take his family in the arms of his prayer and bear them up before the mercy-seat. With what satisfaction does devout parents sometimes in this way, cause their morning and evening sacrifices to ascend the hill of God. A privilege so great, a duty so binding, will prompt the religious father, or pious master, to adapt the language and resolution of good old Joshua, let others do as they will, but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord. The prophet Jeremiah, it seems, entertained high thoughts of family prayer, the neglect of which provoked his request that the *fury of God might be poured out on the heathen and on the families that called not on his name.*

Beloved brethren, you that are heads of families, suffer us to exhort you with ourselves, not to neglect this important duty. Consider you have in some measure souls as well as bodies under your care, and must be accountable as those that have received a sacred deposit, with solemn injunctions from the judge of

quick and dead. Endeavour to store the minds of those under your care, with good and wholesome instruction, that they may have right ideas of *real virtue and religion*, that they may have right thoughts of God, and just views of themselves. Besure to let them hear you daily in your families implore the blessing of heaven upon them; this will serve to impress their minds, as well as your own, with suitable solemnity, and tend greatly to your help in governing yourselves and families. Will any attempt to excuse themselves from this duty of family worship? Can it be that christian heads of families can live altogether in the neglect of this duty? Will they suffer the enemy to rob them of such a privilege, by injecting into their minds *that they have no gift*, their families cannot be profited or edified by them in such an undertaking? Are any of you tried in this respect, dear brethren? Counter not too much with flesh and blood; listen not to the suggestions of satan; you are not ignorant of his devices; resist his temptations; tell him your families can understand your language, that God knows your meaning, and that he will support you in your undertaking. If the enemy with your own hearts, should still strive to excuse from this duty, say there is no excuse that you can make will answer the mind of God who hath commanded you, or the mind of your brethren that have exhorted you, or of your own souls that at times has persuaded you of this duty's being binding on all christian heads of families. A neglect of this duty, not only weakens our own hands, but furnishes our enemies with weapons against us. When those that profess no religion visit our families, and perhaps abide with us some considerable time, or when we hire them into our service, or live together with them under one roof, and they do not hear us pray in our families and perhaps say but little about religion, have they not some reason to question our sincerity in the religion we profess.

Brethren we wish you prosperity in religion; put on the whole christian armour and stand with your loins girt about with truth, then you will be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked; then you may enjoy yourselves in your families, in society, and in the church of God, and will be prepared to meet the approbation of your Judge, and at last be received into his glorious kingdom with exceeding joy; which is the hearty prayer of brethren, yours in the best of hands.

The Stonington Association met at Groton, October 20 and 21, 1801.

To the corresponding Associations, fraternal greetings.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

WE have had another refreshing season, thro' the mercy of our ascended Lord and Saviour, and have abundant rea-

son to rejoice not only at the prosperity of our churches ; but of our corresponding Associations. Dear brethren, there is nothing appears so necessary in the present day as union, The necessity of this is seen both at home and abroad, in church and state. If we look at home, even into our own hearts, we are convinced of this immediately ; for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other. If we look abroad into the world, we behold nation rising up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, till the whole world seems to tremble to its centre. Union must begin or the world must end ; for if it be divided against itself, it cannot stand. But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation ; for the Omnipotent arm of Jehovah has been stretched out to bring us nigh by the blood of Christ. Therefore, we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. The holy Jesus prayed that his followers might be one. We see then that this subject had a place in the Redeemer's heart. He knows that we have strong and potent enemies to conquer, before we could have full possession of our eternal inheritance. He therefore prayed for us. Our enemies are all combined to stop our progress in union, till strength, courage, zeal, and every noble virtue of the soul, is overwhelmed with darkness, filled with the horrid yells of discord, loud as thunder and terrible as destruction. Our enemies are as many, and as powerful as the god of this world, who hath blinded the minds of those who believe not, can make them. Therefore we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, it is necessary that we should be all united in believing the glorious doctrine of the gospel, in putting on the whole armour of God, and in going forth with the drawn sword of the Spirit, glittering in our hands and pointed to the hearts of the king's enemies, till they all bow to his sceptre, or rush from the borders of Zion, into the blackness of darkness for ever. Then shall discord and enthusiastic phrenzy cease to break the cords of union. Then shall the harmonious songs of Zion echo round the world, till all her sons and daughters shall start from their slumber: and ascend the holy mount of God, to join the lofty language of heaven, in ascribing glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might unto the Lamb for evermore. Amen.

Signed in behalf of the Association.

AMOS WELLS, *Moderator.*
JOHN STERRY, *Clerk.*