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Baptists. R. I. Warren Association.
The Sentiments and Plan of the
Germantown, 1769. 4 pp.

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THE
SENTIMENTS
AND
PLAN

Of the Warren [R.I.]

ASSOCIATION

GERMANTOWN:
Printed by CHRISTOPHER SOWER, 1769.

On the eighth day of September. A. D. 1757 a considerable number of baptist ministers and brethren met at Warren in Rhode-Island Government to consult about the expediency of an association, and the manner of conducting it to the advantage of the churches. The issue of the meeting was, Adopting the sentiments and plat-form of the western association; and thereon forming themselves into a like body to be known by the name of the *Warren Association*. The churches that incorporated that year were the church of Warren, of Haverhil, of Bellingham and Middleborough. The next year four more joined them viz the church of Bolton, of Sutton, of Leicester and of Ware. This year 1759 four more were added viz the church of Sturbridge, of Enfield, of Wilbreham and of Montague.

Sentiments touching an Association

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That such a combination of churches is not only prudent but useful, as has appeared even in America by the experience of upwards of 60 years. Some of the uses of it are -- Union and communion among themselves -- maintaining more effectually the order and faith once delivered to the saints -- Having advice in cases of doubts, and help in distress. Being more able to promote the good of the cause -- and becoming important in the eye of the civil powers, as has already appeared in many instances on this continent 2. That such an association is consistent with the independency and power of particular churches, because it pretends to be no other than an *Advisory council*, utterly disclaiming superiority, jurisdiction, coercive right, and infallibility 3. That an association should consist of men knowing and judicious, particular in the Scripture. The reasons are obvious; such men are the fittest to represent communities who profess the Scriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice in religious matters, and who expect that every advice, opinion, or direction they receive from an association be scriptural. They should be skilful and expert in the laws of their God as counsellors are in the laws of the land, for that is the ground of the churches application to them.



Plan of the Association

1. The association to consist only of messengers chosen and sent by the churches. These messengers to be their ministers (for a reason given in sentiment the 3,) together with some judicious brethren. Their expences to be borne by the churches which send them.
- 2, With the messengers the churches send letters addressed to the association. In these letters mention is made of the names of the messengers, and their authority to act for their churches; also of the state of the churches touching their peace - their increase by baptism; and by letters dismissive & commendatory from other churches -- touching their diminution by death, excommunication, and dismissal to other churches, and the present number of members. If any questions are to be put to the association -- any advice to ask -- or business to propose, these are to be expressed in said letters.
3. All matters to be determined in this association by the suffrage of the messengers,

messengers, except what are determinable by Scripture-- such matters are never put to the decision of votes. All that speak are to address the moderator, who is to take care that none be interrupted while speaking, and that no other indecorum take place.

4. Churches are to be received into this association by petitions, setting forth their desire to be admitted-- their faith-- order-- and willingness to be conformable to the rules of the associated body. When a petition is read, and the matter ripened for a vote; the moderator states the question, suffrage being given in favour of the petition, the said moderator declares that such a church is received into the association, in token of which he gives the messengers the *right hand of fellowship*, and bids them take their seats.

4. The association to meet annually at Warren on Tuesday next after the first Wednesday in September at two a clock in the afternoon; and to continue till business be finished. It is to be opened with divine service-- after which a moderator and clerk are chosen-- the letters from the churches are read-- the names of the messengers are written, that they may be called over at after meetings-- then business is attended to, and minutes thereof made-- A circular letter to the churches is prepared and signed, and a copy of it sent to every church, containing the minutes of the association; the states of the churches; when and by whom vacancies are to be supplied; who to preach the next association sermon, and whatever else is needful for the churches to know.

5. A connexion to be formed and maintained between this association and that of Philadelphia by annual letter and messengers from us to them and from them to us.

6. The faith and order of this association are expressed in a confession put forth by upwards of a hundred congregations (in Great Britain) in the year 1689; and adopted by the association of Philadelphia in 1742. Some of the principles in said confession are-- The imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity-- The inability of man to recover himself-- Effectual calling by sovereign grace-- Justification by imputed righteousness-- Immersion for baptism, and that on profession of faith and repentance-- Congregational churches, and their independency-- Reception into them upon evidence of sound conversion &c.

NB. *The above mentioned Confession of faith may be had at Philadelphia in sheets, for 7 coppers a piece, and bound for 15 coppers. Also the baptist Catechism, for 4 coppers; and Norcott on baptism for 5 coppers.*