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Baptists. Rhode Island. Warren Association.

Minutes of the Warren Association.

Boston, Boyles, 1771. 7 pp.

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M I N U T E S

O F T H E

Warren Association,

H E L D A T S U T T O N,

In the Province of

Massachusetts-Bay,

S E P T E M B E R, M D C C L X X I.

IN the year 1770 the association was held at Bellingham, when three churches joined it, viz. the first and third churches in Middleborough, and the church of Ashfield. This year, viz. 1771, the following churches joined the association, of Royallston, Cumberland and Wrentham, South-Brimfield, Richmond, the first of Attleborough.

B O S T O N :

Printed by JOHN BOYLES, in Marlborough-Street.

M D C C L X X I.

Minutes of the *Warren* Association, &c.

ACCORDING to appointment the association met at Sutton, September 10th, 1771—An introductory sermon from 2 *Corinth.* 1st Chap. 12th verse, was preached by the Rev. Isaac Backus, pastor of the first church in Middleborough—Divine service being over, the Rev. Mr. Backus was chosen moderator, and the Rev. John Davis, clerk—Letters were read from eleven churches; four of the associated churches having sent no letters; a letter was also read from the Philadelphian association, which came by the Rev. Morgan Edwards.—In the Letters the following persons were appointed messengers, viz. Rev. Messrs Jeremiah Bastow, Hezekiah Smith, Nathaniel Green, Seth Clarke, Noah Alden, Isaac Backus, Ebenezer Hinds, Ebenezer Smith—Also Messrs James Sibley, Arthur Dagget, Joseph Hale, Daniel Streeter, Ebenezer White, Ebenezer Davis, James Eddy, David Morse, Jonathan Philips, William McKinstry, Ebenezer Holebroke, Isaiah Blood, George Shaw, Nathaniel Barrows, Afa Hunt, Abner Lewis, William Nelson.—The messengers from the five churches that joined this year, were Messrs Whitman Jacobs, Metturean Balleau, Elders—Isaac Esty, Ebenezer Guild, Samuel Hancock, Joseph Guild, John Hicks, Nathaniel Munger, and Humphry Neeham.

Sept. 11th, seven o'clock—The association met, and after a solemn address to God for guidance and protection, proceeded to business—As follows,

1. A letter from the baptist church in Westmoreland to the Rev. Mr. Hinds was read, and advice asked upon it—Advised, That as the subject of the letter had respect particularly to Mr. Hinds himself, the association cannot say any thing to said church, but leave it with Mr. Hinds to answer them as he shall see best.

2. The church in South-Brimfield asked advice respecting the settlement of a minister—Advised, That they renew their encouragement to Mr. Ewing, or call another, as they shall judge best.

3. Resolved, That the circular letter with the minutes of the association be printed; and that this be an establish'd custom in this association.

4. A request from the church in Wilbraham, desiring advice in the Case of their minister, who has been taxed to town, county and province rates, was considered—Agreed to give Elder Seth Clarke a certificate, setting forth, That he is a regular ordained minister, and a member of this association; as are also the churches who ordained him.

5. The address of a baptist church in Richmond was laid before the association—Agreed, That Matturean Balleau, minister in said church have a certificate, setting forth, That the church whereof he is pastor, is a member of this association.

6. The letter from the church of Ashfield consider'd—agreed, That whatever respects the proprietors of Ashfield, as such, lies with themselves—Advised therefore, That the baptists of Ashfield, in the character of proprietors, may treat with the committee of the General Court, appointed to meet in said town the 18th Instant.

7. The transactions of the baptist committee of grievances, for the last year, were laid before the association by the Rev. J. Davis—The association voted their approbation of the conduct of said committee—And that the hearty thanks of the association be given to the members of the committee for their services.—The expences of the committee, while in the public service, were laid before the association in an account, by the Rev. Mr. Stillman, the treasurer for that year, which accompt was approved, and passed.

8. Resolved, That the committee chosen last year by the baptist association, for the purpose of obtaining redress of grievances, be dissolved—and that the agency of the Rev. Hezekiah Smith, cease—and that for the future, all agencies, committees, &c. which may be chosen by the association shall be, and continue from the time of their being chosen, to the next succeeding association, or meeting of the same association, except foreign agencies, &c. and such agents and committees in foreign parts, as may be in the discharge of their office, which are to be and continue until regularly recalled, or dissolved by their constituents.

9. Voted, That the association will chuse an agent in Boston, to act for the baptists as a denomination—Chose Rev. J. Davis, who accepted—and for his assistance chose the gentlemen who composed the former committee, the majority of whom accepted, under the name of an advisory council.

10. The power of the agent is, to go to England in person, or to appoint one to go, if need be, to lay the Case of the baptists, in this province, before the King,

King, and to act in concert with our agents in London, who are, Rev. doctor Stenner and Llewelin, and Rev. Benjamin Wallin.

11. Agreed to supply the following churches, viz. the church in Sturbridge, the 3d Lord's day in September, Mr. Ebenezer Smith; 2d Lord's day in December, Mr. Le Doyt; last Lord's day in October, Mr. Whitman Jacobs 2d in November, Mr. Bastow; 2d in February, Mr. Nathaniel Green; 2d in March, Mr. Ewing; 2d in June, Mr. Hinds.—The church in Wrentham, last Lord's Day in this instant September, Mr. Nelson: 3d in November, Mr. Alden; 2d in May, Mr. Bastow; 2d in January, Mr. Backus; 2d in July, Mr. Thompson.

12. Agreed to hold the association next year in Middleborough—Rev. Hezekiah Smith to preach the introductory sermon; and in case of his failure, Rev. Mr. Barlow.

13. Letters were read, and approved, to the Philadelphian association, and to the churches composing this association.

Agreable to the plan of the association, that whatever is determinable by the scriptures, shall not be put to vote, the following sentiments, founded in the word of God, are recommended to the churches, viz. As the Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, and hath expressly appointed the method to be, that they who are taught in the word should communicate to him that teacheth in all good things, 1 Cor. 9. 15. Gal. 6. 6.—Surely those who do not conscientiously attend to this rule do not duly regard the authority of Jesus Christ, which we desire all to consider—And we bear our testimony against any attempts that are, or may be made to introduce the authority of human laws to support the gospel ministry.

And now brethren, beloved of our Lord, receive the word of exhortation, which we send you in our letter, as follows, viz.

The elders and brethren from the churches of *Haverhill, Bellingham, Boston, Middleborough, Sutton, Leicester, Ashfield, Royalston, Richmond, Attleborough, and Wrentham*, met in association at *Sutton*, the 10th, 11th and 12th of September, 1771. Send greeting.

TO OUR BELOVED BRETHREN,

WE are not insensible of the attempts that have been made by ministers in various ways to assume a classical power and jurisdiction over the churches; neither are we unaware of the evil and pernicious effects of their obtaining such a power; which therefore we desire that you and we may always watch against; yet as it is certain the churches in the apostolic age did,

did, by messengers and letters hold a friendly correspondence with each other for mutual advice, help and comfort, and sometimes by the meeting of many of them together for that purpose; and as we are commanded to follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another, we have been convinced that it is both warrantable and expedient for our churches that are so much scattered through this land, and who have heretofore been so much unacquainted with each other, thus to associate together, for prayer, preaching of the word, mutual advice, and endeavor to promote union and gospel order among them, and to guard against the contrary, as well as to afford what assistance we can to flocks who are destitute, weak or oppressed; and we desire to speak it to the glory of GOD, that we have hitherto found our meetings to answer these important ends; and in our present assembly we have been very agreeably entertained with accounts of the work of GOD in various places, and that most of our churches are at peace among themselves; which, with the tokens of the divine presence that we have enjoyed in this meeting, afford fresh encouragement to our souls to lay aside every weight, and to press forward in the christian race, through all the enemies and dangers of this evil world.

And now, brethren, suffer a word of exhortation: As we are surrounded with objects of sense, which we are exceeding prone to have our hearts overcharged or diverted with, so as to forget or neglect the great things of eternity, therefore it is surely high time to awake out of sleep, to put off the works of darkness, and to put on the whole armour of light; and having our eyes to the great author and finisher of our faith, for direction and grace to help us in every time of need, may we always realize that we are acting for an eternal world, and so behave in our several stations and relations, as that we may give up our account with joy, and not with grief. And in particular, we entreat heads of families to remember the divine command to bring up those under their care in the nurture and admonition of the LORD, giving evidence by their conduct that their not bringing children to baptism before they believe in JESUS CHRIST, has not the least tendency to make them neglect family religion, or the use of all gospel means for the salvation of their souls. And remembering that we are not our own, but are under the strongest obligations to glorify GOD with our bodies and spirits which are his, while yet our goodness cant extend to him, but to the saints which are in the earth, let it engage us all in our several stations, like David, to serve our generation by the will of GOD, and fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life!

Signed by order of the association,

ISAAC PACKUS, Moderator.

JOHN DAVIS, Clerk.

Churches	Ministers Names	Bapt. last Year	Resto.	By Lett.	Dead	Excom.	Dismiss.	Whole Num.
Warren	Mr. Thomson							50
Haverhill	Hezekiah Smith	5			1		15	135
Bellingham	Noah Alden	4			1			38
2d in Middleborough	Ebenezer Hinds	8	1	1	1			33
Lowton	Samuel Stillman	40						108
Sutton	Jeremiah Bastow	8		3	2			45
Leicester	Nathaniel Green	3		2				41
*Ware							2	16
Starbridge		1						28
*Enfield	Joseph Meachem							32
Wilbraham	Seth Clarke	10						32
*Montagu								19
1st in Middleborough	Isaac Backus	5						68
3d in Middleborough	Asa Hunt	6						63
Ashfield	Ebenezer Smith	8						41
Royalston	Whitman Jacobs							29
Cumberland and } Wrentham }								10
South-Brimfield								10
Richmond	Matturean Balleau							29
1st in Attleborough								10

Total, 837

* The churches mark'd with the star (*), are in the preceding state of the churches, as they were last year, they not having sent letters this year.

N. B. The churches are requested to make collections for the agency, and send them together with all necessary accounts of grievances, attested properly, to Boston.