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Baptists. Rhode Island, Warren Association, 1772.

Minutes of the Proceedings September, 8 & 9, 1772.

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MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

WARREN-ASSOCIATION,

IN THEIR MEETING AT

MIDDLEBOROUGH,

IN THE

COUNTY OF PLYMOUTH,

SEPTEMBER, 8 & 9, 1772.

B O S T O N :

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UNION-STREET. 1772.

MINUTES of the Warren Association, &c.

According to appointment the Messengers from the respective Churches met at Middleborough September 8th. 1772. And Elder John Gano, of New-York, by particular request, preached a very suitable Sermon from Mat. 6. 10. Then Elder Alden, was chosen Moderator, and Elder Hunt, Clerk; and letters were read and accounts given of the circumstances of the churches, and of God's dealings with them; and the following Elders and Brethren appeared as Messengers from them, viz. Elders, Noah Alden, Charles Thompson, Isaac Backus, Ebenezer Hinds, Asa Hunt, Nathanael Green, and Ebenezer Smith; with our Brethren, Silas Wheelock, John Comer, William Turner Miller, Nathanael Shaw, David Alden, William Hoar, William Nelson, Junr. Abiſha Tinkham, Ebenezer Davis, Jacob Hill, Ebenezer Colby, Nathanael Monger, Richard Montegue, Abner Haskal, Joseph Guild, John Choever, Lemuel Donham, and Moulton Bullock.

And 1st. Elder Gano informed us, that a letter was written to us from the Philadelphia Association

Association in their last Meeting, wherein He, with another Elder, were appointed as their Messengers to this Association ; but as the other Elder who had the letter was not arrived, he could only give us at present some verbal account of their affairs ; and as the vessel which he expected to return in, was waiting for him, he could not well tarry 'till this Meeting was over, therefore our Elders, Backus and Thompson, were now appointed to draw up a letter from this Association, to that of Philadelphia.

Adjourned to 8 in the Morning, and had preaching in the Evening.

Wednesday September 9. Being met according to adjournment, a letter to Philadelphia Association was brought in and accepted, and our beloved Brethren Hezekiah Smith, and Charles Thompson, were appointed our Messengers to them.

2. Brother Nathan Plimton, came with a letter from the second Baptist Church in Boston, wherein they desire to join the Association ; and they were accordingly received.

3. As we are informed by the Church in Scurbridge, that some of their Brethren have withdrawn from them, who upon labouring with them, own that they did covenant with that Church, but plead that the Lord now calls them out from them, because they are dead, without alledging any particular error in doctrine, or disorder in practice ; and request our
advice

advice in the case. We answer, that though we would always treat conscientious persons, tho' they differ from us, with great tenderness ; yet those who refuse to walk with their Brethren merely because they say, God calls them, so to do, without producing either distinct principles or plain facts, to justify their conduct, we think they ought to be dealt with as disorderly persons. Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Thess. iii. 6.

4. Mr. Henry Dawson, earnestly requested a hearing in the Association, on some things relative to his character. A committee was chosen to discourse with him ; who reported, that the case was such that it did not appear to them that we could properly do any thing upon it here : Which report was accepted.

5. The Church at Richmond requested our advice concerning two persons that were formerly dipped by E. W. who was neither ordained nor baptized, and his conduct in other respects was reproachful to religion. It is our opinion, that what he did was not gospel baptism. *

6. Elder

* The ground of this opinion is, That baptism is a sacred ordinance, which Christ commissioned his ministers to administer to believers. Mat. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. And though we doubt not of it's being valid to such, when administered by officers in his Church, although they might afterward prove themselves to be bad men ; yet for a man to presume to administer it, who is neither an officer, nor so much as a member, in any particular Church of Christ, and that in a land where proper administrators are to be had, this we think is not gospel baptism.

6. Elder Backus was chosen Agent for these Churches to transact their affairs the year ensuing, both in this country, and with our Agents in London ; with the advice of Messrs Samuel Sillman, Hezekiah Smith, John Davis, Noah Alden, Nathan Plimton, Philip Freeman, Richard Gridley, and Philip Freeman, Junr. not less than three of them to act.

7. Agreed to supply the following Churches who are destitute of Pastors, viz. Attleborough, the last Lord's day in October, Elder Alden ; the last in January, Elder Backus ; the last in April, Elder Hunt ; the last in July, Elder Hix. Wrentham, the last in December, Mr. Jones ; the first in January, Elder Alden ; the last in May, Elder Hinds ; the first in September, Elder Thompson. South-Brimfield, the third in this Month, Elder Smith ; the third in Dec. Elder Green ; the second in July, Elder Green again. Montegue, the second Lord's day in November, Elder Green ; the first in February, Elder Smith ; the last in May, Elder Clark ; the last in August, Elder Hunt. Sturbridge, the second in November, Elder Alden ; the first in February, Elder Clark ; the last in April, Elder Jacobs ; the last in June, Elder Hinds.

8. The Association next year is to be held at Medfield, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September, at 2 o'Clock Afternoon ;— Elder Hinds to preach the introductory Sermon ; and in case of failure, Elder Green.

Lastly, a letter addressed to the Churches, as follows,

The

The Elders and Brethren of the united Churches met at Middleborough, Sept. 8, 9. 1772. to their respective Churches, send greeting.

Dearly Beloved,

WE would inform you that through divine goodness we met in peace, and received very agreeable accounts from several of our Churches; that the Lord has poured out of his Spirit for the awakening of many souls, and we trust that a considerable number have been savingly brought home to God by his grace;—blessed be his name. Come help us to magnify the Lord for his goodness, and his tender mercies that are over all his works. Some contentions which had long subsisted have been amicably settled, and divisions remarkably healed. Yet we are not without cause of mourning still, for the coldness and deadness that so much prevails, and some particular difficulties in some places, which call for deep humiliation before God. Oh, Brethren, let us earnestly cry to the great Head of the Church, that he would so shower down his blessings, that the good work begun may become universal, to the glory of his great name!

And before we conclude, permit us, Brethren, to give you a word of exhortation in love.—We hope that the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom is what we all earnestly desire: And for this end it is highly necessary that we live near to God, and make his word the man of our counsel, and that we love one another as
he

he hath given us commandment, and that we be at peace among ourselves : In order to which there must be a subjection to the laws of Christ's house. Gospel discipline in the church is both for her health and prosperity, and each member submitting to her authority, appears beautiful ; then contentions will be avoided, and each member will seek, not only their own, but also their brothers felicity. O that this was universally the case ! Then would Zion *look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.* We also desire the Churches to be careful how they admit straggling persons to preach among them, as it has proved very hurtful to many. Certainly it is the duty of every Church to examine strangers before they improve them, and if they are not known, nor have any credentials of their standing, they ought not to be received. And as the harvest is truly great, and the labourers few, pray earnestly that the Lord of the harvest would send forth more labourers, that destitute flocks may be supplied. And wherever promising gifts appear in any of the Churches, we hope they will not fail to call them forth to the edification of God's people.

We remain your's in gospel bonds,

NOAH ALDEN, Moderator.

ASA HUNT, Clerk.

State of these Baptist Churches.

Names.	Ministers.	ad.	de.	ex.	dis.	w.	n.
1 Boston,	Sam. Stillman, 23	1					130
2 Boston,	John Davis, - -						
Bellingham,	Noah Alden, - 1						39
Haverhill,	Hezekiah Smith, 6						41
Warren,	Ch. Thompson, 26	1					75
1 Middleboro',	Isaac Backus, 7	3	1	4			67
2 Middleboro',	Eben. Hinds, 1						34
3 Middleboro',	Afa Hunt, 1	1		2			60
Leicester,	Nath. Green, - -	1					40
Wilbraham,	Seth Clark, 3						35
* Enfield,	Joseph Mechem, -						32
* Ware,	- - - - -						16
Ashfield,	Eben. Smith, 4						45
Montegue,	- - - - -						24
Sutton,	Jerem. Bestow, - -						45
Royalstone,	Whitman Jacobs, -	1		1			27
Richmond,	Mattur. Bellau, 16						45
Wrentham and	} - - - - -						10
Cumberland,							
Attleborough,	- - - - - 6						16
South-Brimfield,	- - - - - 2						12
Sturbridge,	- - - - -	1					27
		102	9	1	7	920	

The Churches with this Mark * we have had no new Account from.