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Warren Association of Baptists, 1781.

Minutes of the Warren Association in their Meeting at
South-Brimfield [Sept. 11-12, 1781].

Providence, [1781]. 8 pp.

JCB copy.

M I N U T E S

O F T H E

W A R R E N A S S O C I A T I O N;

In their Meeting at SOUTH-BRIMFIELD, the 11th and 12th of September, 1781.

TH E Elders and Brethren from our Churches met at South-Brimfield, Sept. 11, 1781, when Elder Hunt delivered a suitable discourse, from 2 Cor. x. 4. After which a Moderator and Clerk were chosen, and the following list was taken, of the messengers from the Churches, of the numbers added, dismissed, excluded, or that have died, and their present number of members. Churches with this * mark, we had no new account from. Ministers with this † mark, were not present.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Ex.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>No.</i>
1 Boston,	† SAMUEL STILLMAN,	8				154
* 2 Boston,	† ISAAC SKILLMAN,					43
Bellingham,	NOAH ALDEN,	8				51
	Samuel Darling,					
Haverhill,	† HEZEKIAH SMITH,	29		1	1	192
* Warren,	† CHA. THOMPSON,					84
1 Middleborough,	ISAAC BACKUS,	24				138
	Nathaniel Shaw,					
	David Alden,					
2 Middleborough,	† EBENEZER HINDS,	13				76
	Samuel Nelson,					
3 Middleborough,	ASA HUNT,	32		1	2	187
	James Shaw,					
	Abraham Holmes,					
Charlton,	NATHANIEL GREEN,	74			2	139

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Ex.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Wilbraham,	Daniel Bacon, Daniel Streeter, Abijah Lamb, SETH CLARK, William Scott, Jonathan Warlen,	12			2	160
*Enfield, Ashfield,	————— † EBENEZER SMITH, Aaron Lyon, Israel Rice,	3		3	1	30 93
Montague, Sutton,	Richard Montague, Samuel Rich, Samuel Waters, William Jacobs,	34		5		32 59
Royalston,	WHITMAN JACOBS, James Haven, Jacob Efty,	9	1	4		89
*Richmond, Wrentham,	† MATUREAN BELEAU, WILLIAM WILLIAMS, Obadiah Allen,					83 42
Attleborough,	JOB SEAMANS, Edward Clarke, Levy Maxcey, Samuel Bloss,	6			1	81
South-Brimfield,	ELIJAH CODDING, Nathaniel Munger, Joel Rogers, Daniel Winchester,	31	1			177
Woodstock,	BIEL LEDOYT, David Bolls, Silas Corbin,	70	5	1	2	140
Chelmsford, Barnstable,	Thomas Hutchins, —————	4	1	2		81 39
New-Salem,	† SAMUEL BIGELOW, Theophilus Crocker,	5	1	1	1	24

Churches.

Messengers.

		<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Ex.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Grafton,	Benjamin Sibley, THOMAS USTICK, Bradford Chace,					39
Leicester,	† BENJAMIN FOSTER, Thomas Holman, Samuel Cheever,	14			1	76
Freetown,	† ABNER LEWIS,	6	36	1		97
Medfield,	THOMAS GAIR, James Morse,	3	1		2	67
Harwich,	Jonathan Jeffers,	3	2		2	45
Killingly,	GEORGE ROBINSON; William Givens, Ezekiel Blackmarr,	10	2	2		61
Dudley,	Jonathan Willard, John Blood,	9				28
Southington,	† JOHN MERRIMAN, Eber Merriman,					18
* 3 Rehoboth,	† JOHN HICKS,					106
Harvard,	ISAIAH PARKER,	5			1	72
Woodstock, } in Vermont, }	ELISHA RANSOM,	9				37
Newtown,	CALEB BLOOD,	7		1		76
Salem, N. Hamp.	Samuel Fletcher,	20				47
Colrain,	—————	7				26
* Northbridge,	—————					15
Cambridge,	John Williams,					27
2 Ashford,	Silvanus Shurtliff, Valentine W. Rathbun,					47
Ashburnham,	Ebenezer Conant, Isaiah Stone,					32

470 | 50 | 22 | 19 | 3107

Increase last Year,

442

The three last of these Churches, upon satisfaction obtained, were received at this Meeting.

1. A letter and minutes were received from the Philadelphia Association, by the hands of our beloved Brother, Elder William Rogers, their messenger to us.

2. A letter was received from the Association lately formed at Shaftsbury, in the State of Vermont, by Deacon Jonathan Richardson; which Association, according to their request, was unanimously received into union with us, and both of these messengers were received to act with us.

3. Our Elders Parker and Gair were appointed to draw up a letter to Shaftsbury Association; Elder Williams and Brother Montague to draw one to Philadelphia; and Elder Backus to prepare a circular letter to our Churches.

Elder Rogers preached in the evening.

Sept. 12, met at eight in the morning.

4. The case of our Brethren of Harvard Society was considered, who nobly and firmly suffered the loss of goods and imprisonment last year, in the cause of religious liberty; and, as partners therein, this Association unanimously recommend it to our Churches, in a liberal manner, by subscription or otherwise, to speedily raise money for their relief, and convey it to our Elders Backus, Green, or Brother Montague, for them immediately to forward the same to Elder Stillman, of Boston, (or for the Churches to send it to him) who is desired, by advice of our Committee, to transmit a suitable sum to Elder Parker, for him, with Harvard Church, to distribute it to said Brethren according to their sufferings; of which Elder Stillman is requested to return an account to our next meeting.

5. Ordered, That our Agent and Committee present, at a suitable season, our protest against the power claimed in the third article in the bill of rights. And also that they present an address to the public, in our name,

upon the important event of the commencement of a new constitution of civil government.

6. A letter of complaint from Mr. Moses Thomas was presented, against the third Church in Middleborough; but as this Association claims no jurisdiction in points of discipline, we recommend it to the neighbouring Churches (if properly applied to) to afford that assistance which is in their power.

7. This Association having received, and publicly read, the protest of the Baptist Church in Philadelphia, against the doctrine of the *restoration of bad men and angels from hell*, as broached by Mr. Elhanan Winchester among them; resolved, that they do highly approve of the conduct of that Church therein; and we heartily unite with them in rejecting said doctrine, and from our fellowship, all those who avow the same.

8. Resolved, That the paragraph in the plan of this Association,—“And becoming important, in the eye of the civil powers, as has already appeared in many instances on this continent,” be erased.

9. Our Elders Backus, Green, and Ledoyt, are appointed our messengers to Shaftsbury Association; and President Manning, and Elder William Rogers, to that of Philadelphia.

10. Collected to pay our Agent's past expences, £ 3 12 s.

11. Agreed upon the following supplies for destitute societies, viz.

Montague. Elder Robinson, the last Lord's-day in September; Elder Green, the Lord's-day before the second Wednesday in June.

Sutton. Elder Lamson, the second in October; Elder Ledoyt, the third in October; Mr. Warren, the first in November; Elder Green, the second in December; Elder Blood, the second in March.

Cambridge. Elder Parker, the second in November; Mr. Green, the third in November; Mr. Fletcher, the

second in January; Elder Williams, the first in May; Elder Hunt, the second in June.

Chelmsford. Elder Parker, the third in October; Mr. Green, the last in October; Elder Blood, the second in December; Mr. Fletcher, the second in February.

Ashburnham. Elder Parker, the second in January, and second in June; Mr. Fletcher, the second in April.

Harwich. Elder Seamans, the fourth in October; Elder Hunt, the second in November.

Barnstable. Elder Seamans, the third in October; Mr. Green, the second in July.

12. The same Agent and Committee (except Mr. Philip Freeman, jun.) are continued; and a collection is recommended to be made, and brought to the next Association, to defray the necessary expences of the Agency.

13. Agreed, that the next Association be held in Providence, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September next, at two o'clock, P. M. Elder Stillman to preach the sermon; or, in case of failure, Elder Smith, of Haverhill.

We conclude with a short address to our churches.

Dearlly Beloved,

THROUGH the sparing goodness and infinite mercy of our God, we have been preserved another year, amidst innumerable dangers, both temporal and spiritual, and have been favoured with a very agreeable meeting*, wherein we have received good tidings from many parts of our country; that most of our churches enjoy peace among themselves; that sundry of them have had a large increase; and that a blessed work of divine grace has prevailed, in sundry places, so as to cause the gathering of a number of new churches. Great

* Such unanimity prevailed through all our public actions, that there was scarce a dissenting vote.

and marvellous are the works of the Lord, which loudly call for our grateful acknowledgments, and thankful behaviour. While we see, at the same time, the importance of regarding the voice of our Saviour, who says, *Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many, &c.* Mat. xxiv. 4—13. Such power, signs, lying wonders, and deceivableness of unrighteousness, now appear in different quarters of this country, as many would scarcely have believed could have been possible in this land of gospel light. Neither was it imagined, a few years ago, that the conceit of the final restoration of all bad men and angels to endless happiness, could have been openly preached up with approbation. Yet Mr. Winchester has fallen into this latter error and delusion since our last meeting, to the grief of multitudes, and the causing of an open separation in our sister church, in the city of Philadelphia. But the word of truth informs us, that there must needs also be heresies among us, that they who are approved may be made manifest; and that nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one who nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity. And for your assistance herein, permit us to lay before you the following things:

1. That the best remedy against such evils, is a close attention to God's revealed will, by faith and love in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.

2. Beware of all persons, of every name, that would try to draw you off from the plain language and analogy of scripture, under pretence of deep and hidden mysteries therein; for our Saviour repeatedly vanquished the adversary with what was expressly written; and the Apostle says, *we use great plainness of speech*; and warns us

against such as would *intrude* into things which *be hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.* 2 Cor. iii. 12, and iv. 2. Col. ii. 18.

3. Let the following capital points of truth be particularly attended to, viz. That all nations are as nothing before God, whose declarative glory is the ultimate end of all his works. Isai. ii. 17, 18, and xl. 6—17. Whereas many of late would make love to creatures his ultimate end; which is a changing the truth of God into a lie, and worshipping and serving of the creature more than the Creator. Rom. i. 25. Also that our obligation to love God supremely, and to love our neighbour as ourselves, is as immutable as his perfections are; and that there is an infinite evil in every breach of this law, which no doings or sufferings of any creature, either in this or a future world, can ever remove; and that the infinite merits of Christ, applied to the soul by the Holy Spirit, is the only way whereby any can have their consciences purged from dead works, to serve the living God. Heb. ix. 14, and x. 1—10. And finally, may it be deeply fixed in all our minds, that, as Jehovah is the absolute Sovereign of the universe, it is impossible that any one can obtain the least degree of real happiness, by disobedience to him; and that those who truly seek him, shall not want any good thing. Therefore may the language of all our souls be—*what I know not, teach thou me; wherein I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

By Order of the Association,

JAMES MANNING, Moderator.
THOMAS USTICK, Scribe.