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Warren Association of Baptists, 1782.

Minutes of the Warren Association . . . at Providence,
the 10th of Sept. 1782.

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MINUTES

OF THE

WARREN ASSOCIATION,

Convened at Providence, the 10th of Sept. 782.

THE Elders and Messengers of the several Churches met at the Baptist meeting-house, at 2 o'clock P. M. when Elder Stillman preached a sermon suitable to the occasion, from Eph. iii. 8. After which a Moderator and Clerk were chosen; and a list, as follows, was taken of the Delegates from the Churches, of the numbers added, dismissed, excluded, or who have died the year past together with the present number of members in each church. The Churches from which we have not received an account are thus distinguished *; and the Ministers who were absent are marked thus †.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>N^o</i>
1 Boston,	SAMUEL STILLMAN, Thomas Allen,	6	2		158
2 Boston, Bellingham,	ISAAC SKILLMAN, NOAH ALDEN, Samuel Darling,	2 9	1 3		43 57
Haverhill,	HEZEKIAH SMITH, Timothy Jackman,	1		3	190
1 Middleborough,	ISAAC BACKUS, Elijah Ames,	5	1		142
2 Middleborough,	EBENEZER HINDS, Ebenezer Nelson,	2	2	1	75
3 Middleborough,	ASA HUNT, Elisha Clark,	9	1		194

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Ex.</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>No.</i>
Carlton,	† NATHANIEL GREEN, Daniel Bacon,	15			3	151
Wibraham,	† SETH CLARK, Jonathan Waldren,	11	9		1	161
Enfield, Ainnd, * Morague, Sutton	————— † EBENEZER SMITH, ————— David Harwood, Aaron Elliot,	20				93 32 79
Royaltn,	† WHITMAN JACOBS, Ebenezer Ingoils, Jacob Esty,	9	4		4	91
Richmd,	† MATUREAN BELEAU, Nathaniel Cole, Thomas Kelton,	22			1	104
Wrentim,	WILLIAM WILLIAMS, Joseph Millard,	1				43
Attleborough,	JOH SEAMANS, John Cheever,	1		1		80
South-Simfield,	† ELIJAH CODDING, Joseph Smallege, Alverfon Wade,	5		3	2	230
Woodstek, Chelmstrd,	BIEL LE DOYT, ————— Shubael Lovell,	5 6		3	1 2	141 85
Barnstable, New-Salm,	† SAMUEL BIGELOW, John Sellon,	3 3				42 27
Grafton, Liceiter, Freeown,	————— BENJAMIN FOSTER, ABNER LEWIS, Edward Thurber, Seth Ames,		2			37
		1	6		2	71
		3	2	2		96
Medfeld,	THOMAS GAIR, Ebenezer Fales,	2				69
Harwich, Killingty,	Jonathan Jeffers, GEORGE ROBINSON, Onver Bowen,	1 1		2		41 60
Dudley,	Obed Warren,	3				31

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Ex.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>No.</i>
* Southington,	—————					18
3 Rehoboth,	JOHN HICKS,		5		1	100
* Harvard,	† ISAIAH PARKER,					72
Woodstock, in } Vermont, }	ELISHA RANSOM,	33				70
Newton,	Joel Butler,					
	CALEB BLOOD,	4		1	1	78
	Jeremiah Richardson,					
Salem, in N. Ham.	SAMUEL FLETCHER,	11		2		56
Colerain,	—————					26
Northbridge,	Nathaniel Cooper,	2				17
	Abishai Crosmon,					
Cambridge,	Thomas Lock,			1		26
	Isaac Munro,					
* 2 Ashford,	—————					46
* Ashburnham,	—————					
Providence,	JAMES MANNING,					127
	Ephraim Wheaton,					
	Samuel Whitman,					
	John Jenckes,					
	Aaron Mason,					
Gloucester,	JOSEPH WINSOR,					79
	Joseph Eddy,					
Starbridge,	Jorden Dodge,					50
	Henry Fisk,					
	Jonathan Phillip,					
		219	32	25	24	3388

The three last Churches, by their Delegates, were cordially received into this body, at the present meeting.

1. A letter and minutes were read from the Philadelphia Association, by Elder William Rogers, who was received to act with us. Also we received a letter from the Shaftsbury Association, in the State of Vermont, by Elder Peter Worden, Deacon Stephen Carpenter, and Mr. Lemuel Powers, who took a place with us.

2. Adjourned to 5 o'clock Wednesday morning, then, previous to attending on business, to spend some time in

prayer, on account of the affecting drought. Elder Nelson preached an evening lecture at the Reverend Joseph Snow's.

3. Wednesday, A. M. met, according to adjournment, and spent an hour and an half in prayer.

1. Elders Stillman and Foster were chosen to draw a letter to the Philadelphia and Shaftsbury Associations.

2. Elder Thompson was appointed to prepare the circular letter to our Churches.

3. Elder Stillman made a return of the monies received and paid on account of our suffering brethren of Harvard Church, to the amount of £ 6 4 9. The several sums from the respective Churches are as follow :

3 Middleborough,	£	1	2	10
Newton,		1	17	6
Bellingham,		0	12	6
Medfield,		2	11	11

£ 6 4 9

Voted, That as the sum collected the last year, for the Brethren at Harvard, is supposed by no means adequate to their exigencies and sufferings, we unanimously recommend to the Churches the ensuing year to make additional contributions for their relief, and send said monies to Elder Stillman, at Boston.

4. Appointed the following Brethren to be our Messengers to the Philadelphia and Shaftsbury Associations. To the former, President Manning, and Elders Williams and Rogers; the latter, Elders Alden and Robinson.

5. The Church at Harwich having requested advice as to the best mode of proceeding, in case any Church should deviate from the faith and order of the gospel as held by these Churches :

Voted, We are of opinion, that in such case the neighbouring Churches ought to inform the deviating Church of their uneasiness, and desire a candid hearing; if this is denied, or, if it be granted, and satisfaction is not obtained, they should withdraw fellowship from said Church, and give information to the next Association, who have a right to drop such Church from this body; though we disclaim all power and jurisdiction over the Churches.

6. As the instruction and morals of the rising generation are objects of very great importance, Voted, That a spelling-book, containing a good English grammar, and the Baptist catechism, be published; and Elder Foster is desired to prepare said book for the press, in conjunction with President Manning, Elders Backus, Stillman and Skillman, to be presented at our next annual meeting for examination; and, in the interim, for the encouragement of this undertaking, it is recommended to the Churches to raise by subscription what monies they can, and send the same to the Association next year.

7. The Association, from a representation made to them, by the Corporation of the College in Providence, of the low state of the funds of said College, and the urgent necessity of encreasing them, in order to support suitable instructors therein, and from an idea of the great importance of good education, have taken into consideration, as the most probable method to accomplish this valuable end, the recommendation of a subscription throughout all the Baptist Societies on this continent, as well as to all the friends of literature of every denomination, on the following conditions:

W E the subscribers promise and engage to pay the several sums affixed to our names, to _____, to be by him paid to John Brown, Esq; of Providence, Treasurer of the Corporation, or his successor in said office, or order; to be placed at interest, and the interest only to be applied for the above purpose.

N. B. The several Churches are desired to insert, in the above blank, the name of the most suitable person in the society, for this service.

Adjourned one hour and an half.

8. A letter was presented by Elder Barstow, in respect to the difficulties subsisting between him and the Church at Sutton. Voted, That we conceive it is entirely inconsistent with the original design of the Association to interfere in any such matters.

Agreed to supply vacant societies, as follows:

Stonington-Point (Connecticut) Elder Robinson, last Lord's-day in October; Elder Le Doyt, third ditto; Elder Hinds, last in June.

Weston. Elder Blood, second in December, second in January, and first in March; Elder Alden, third in November; Elder Hinds, second in May; Elder Hunt, first in October; Elder Fletcher, last in November; Mr. Crosmon, second in July.

Sutton. Mr. Dodge, second in October; Elder Le Doyt, last in November, and second in February; Elder Robinson, second in December; Elder Hinds, last in October; Elder Alden, third in April; Elder Foster, third in May; Elder Blood, first in June; Elder Lewis, third in June.

Grafton. Mr. Green, last in September; and Mr. Warren, third in December; Elder Alden, first in May; Elder Winsor, first in June.

Templeton. Elder Hinds, third in November; Mr. Dodge, first in February; Elder Hicks, second in June.

Chelmsford. Elder Blood, last in April; Mr. Crosmon, third in June; Elder Alden, second in August.

Barnstable. Mr. Lewis, last in September; Elder Hinds, second in December; Elder Thompson, second in June; Mr. Ingolls, second in July.

Harwich. Elder Hinds, third in December; Elder Ingolls, first in July.

The next Association will be held at Charlton, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September, at 2 o'clock, P. M. Elder Hezekiah Smith to preach the introductory sermon; in case of failure, Elder Thompson.

Now follows our circular letter.

To the Philadelphia and Shaftsbury Associations, the Warren Association sendeth greeting.

Dearlly beloved in our Lord Jesus,

Y O U R letters, by the hands of your Messengers, we received, and rejoice to hear that you had a comfortable meeting; your Churches being in peace, and your numbers increasing. That sacred prediction of Isaiah the Prophet is in part fulfilled, in the happy change of circumstances in some places, viz. that *the wilderness, and the solitary place, shall blossom like the rose.* God works like himself; his sovereignty becomes apparent whenever he revives religion.

Time and place are with him; he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He comes down by his Spirit like the rain upon the mown grass, and like showers that water the earth. One shall be taken, and another left. Some places are favoured with the Holy Ghost, while others are passed by. But the cause of God is a common cause to all the faithful; consequently let who will be the instrument to promote it, or whatever places are thus highly favoured, they do and will give glory to him. Through the riches of grace manifested to some of our associated Churches, there have been considerable additions. These revivals are specimens what God can and will do; and lead us to anticipate with pleasure that period so often spoken of in God's word, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. In the view of which we shall in union cry, come Lord Jesus, come quickly!

We desire to adore the great Head of the Church, that we have met in peace, and in a very full Association. We trust God will be glorified in us. This should ever be our prevailing study, that whether we live, we should live to God; or whether we die, that we should die to him.

We request an interest in your prayers, and the continuation of your friendship.

You mention and bewail the prevalence of false religion; so do we. Yet let us not be discouraged; for the government of the Church is upon the shoulders of Jesus: His plan relating to it is laid with infinite exactness, and shall infallibly be accomplished. 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Duty is ours, the event is his. Let us then wait the issue, which will be glorious, and in the mean time exult like John the Divine, saying, *Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!*

Signed by Order of the Association.

We now close with an address to the Churches.

Dearlly Beloved,

THROUGH the tender mercy and goodness of the Lord, we were favoured with a comfortable interview, and received some agreeable accounts from our Churches. They

appear in general to be at peace and unity among themselves. But additions by the Lord this year have not been as in years past: A growing stupidity too much prevails among us; while those who are unsound in the faith are exerting all their abilities to spread corrupt sentiments, and lead unguarded minds from the simplicity of the truth; and to our great grief they meet with too much countenance from many. And as we are surrounded on every side with errors, dangerous to the souls of men, suffer, dear Brethren, a word of exhortation: Weigh all doctrines in the balance of the sanctuary before you embrace them, as coming from God. Make the divine oracles the man of your counsel; for they are able to furnish you to every good work, and arm you against all errors. Be helpers, together with your Elders, to keep up the purity of doctrine, and discipline of the gospel, in your respective Churches. And while you strive to adorn your profession, labour to inculcate love, peace and unity, with each other. Although you may meet with various trials and discouragements, faint not; "*for if you suffer with Christ, you shall also reign with him.*" Your present afflictions, which are for the trial of your faith, shall yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness, even an eternal weight of glory.

Your Elders are embarked with you in the same glorious cause; and determine, by the grace of God, to persevere, through good and evil report, to the eternal kingdom—their resolutions being strengthened by your standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free. Withing you grace, mercy and peace, through God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, we subscribe ourselves your servants in the best of causes,

HEZEKIAH SMITH, Moderator,
THOMAS GARR, Clerk.