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M I N U T E S

OF THE

Warren Association,

HELD AT THE

Baptist Meeting-House

IN

S A L E M,

SEPTEMBER 8 and 9,

1807.

Boston :

PRINTED BY MANNING AND LORING, NO. 2, CORNHILL.

[1807]

MINUTES, &c.

TUESDAY, September 8, 1807.†

1. **A**T half past two o'clock, agreeably to appointment, Brother Stephen Gano delivered the introductory sermon, from Acts xxvi. 22. *Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.* After which, collected for the widows and children of deceased ministers.

2. Chose Brother Stephen Gano, Moderator, and Brother Thomas Baldwin, Clerk.

3. After prayer by Brother Messer, proceeded to read the letters from the churches, and took the following account of the members added, dismissed, excluded, or who have died the past year, and the present number in each church.

N. B. The names of ordained ministers are in *small capitals*; licensed preachers in *italic*. Those ministers with this mark * were not present. Churches marked thus † we had no information from this session. Vacant churches distinguished by a dash —

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
1st Boston	*JOSEPH CLAY John Wait James Loring Micah Orcutt	3	11	6	7	363
2d Boston	THOMAS BALDWIN Jacob Holland Josiah C. Ransford Thomas Badger	10	20	3	2	384
Haverhill	WILLIAM BATCHELDER Phineas Nichols Timothy Jackman Amos George	13		1	2	270
Warren	LUTHER BAKER Paschal Allen	5	3	3	5	156
1st Middleborough	SAMUEL ABBOT Afahel Shaw Joseph Ames Sylvanus Leonard	13	4	2	2	134
2d Middleborough	SIMEON COOMES William Canada	50				117

† At ten o'clock, Brother Baldwin addressed the people from Heb. iii. 1, 2.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exchd.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
3d Middleborough	SAMUEL NELSON David Jacobs	2	4			89
Wrentham	WILLIAM WILLIAMS Samuel Guild Nathaniel Aldridge <i>Samuel Blos, jun.</i> David Aldridge	1		2	1	73
Attleborough	*JAMES READ William Blackinton David Guild William Pond	3			3	111
1st Chelmsford	Benjamin Adams Jeremiah Warren John Spaulding, jun.		1		1	66
Barstable	Gorham Lovell	4			1	65
Medfield					1	29
†Harwich	*ABNER LEWIS					50
Harvard	GEORGE ROBINSON Ephraim Emerson Jeremiah Dyer Benjamin W. Willard	2	2			67
Newton	JOSEPH GRAFTON Aaron Dana Ebenezer Hovey <i>Charles Train</i>	2			2	99
†Northbridge	*JOHN COOPER					45
Woburn	WILLIAM BENTLY Jesse Converse Jacob Richardson STEPHEN GANO ASA MESSER Joseph Jencks	2	2		1	119
1st Providence	*ELISHA ANDREWS Stephen Haskell Asa Cutting	8	4	2	5	313
Templeton	SHUBAEL LOVELL Timothy Morse Joseph Goodridge Moses Tinney	6			1	137
Rowley	*VALENTINE W. RATHBUN JOHN RATHBUN Nathan Alden Thomas Pratt Jesse Howard	9				51
Bridgewater		10	1			103

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Weston					16	
Randolph	*JOEL BRIGGS Elisha Ames William Blanchard Micah White DAVID BURSEL	2			3	68
Carver					1	71
Hollis	David Brown	4	2		3	52
Marshfield						40
†2d Sutton	*WILLIAM BATCHELDER					52
Danvers	*JEREMIAH CHAPLIN Israel Porter Benjamin Kent	7	1			54
Troy	*JOB BORDEN Enoch French George Wordell Daniel Boomer	37			2	95
†Marshpee						
Newport	Samuel Barker Jafon Sprague Elisha Smith	8	5	4	6	255
Charlestown	WILLIAM COLLIER David Goodwin Oliver Holden James Harrison	12		2	1	82
Rehoboth	*JOHN PITMAN Joseph Bucklin Samuel Brown Sylvanus Newman	4		1	1	56
Beverly	ELISHA WILLIAMS Eleazer Wallis Nicholas Dodge Afa Woodbury	13		2	1	118
Grafton					1	30
Reading	James M'Lellan EBENEZER NELSON Jeremiah Green Lillis Eaton David Smith	3	1		2	80
Taunton	John Tisdale Jonathan Smith	8		43		109
New Boston, N. H.	ISAIAH STONE Joseph Andrews John Whipple, jun.	6		1		65

§ See article 8, page 7.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders, and Messengers.</i>	<i>Addd.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Malden	Samuel Wait Amos Howard, jun. Ebenezer Harnden	4			1	105
Somerset	William Barton Afa Pierce William Mitchell	11	2	2		42
Salem	LUCIUS BOLLES William Herrick Ithuriel Hinman William Nutting Benjamin Blanchard Warwick Palfrey	18			1	125
2d Providence	JOSEPH CORNELL William West David Peck	10			1	88
2d Chelmsford	JOHN PECKENS Eliakim Hutchins Samuel Adams	2		1	1	42
Weare, N. H.	Amos Wood John Richards	5		1	1	39
Patucket	DAVID BENEDICT Oliver Starkweather William Allen	5		1	1	70
Kingston	EZRA KENDALL Zechariah Brigden Nathaniel Cook Job Washburn Tilson Dunham	21	2			100
Nottingham West,	Nathaniel Currier Zechariah Greele	6				76
African Church } in Boston }	THOMAS PAUL Nester Pendleton	5		3		50
Hanover	William Curtis	2				32
Greenwich	David Curtis John Allen Samuel Green	5	1	1	2	61
Ipswich	HENRY POTTLE Samuel Appleton Aaron Treadwell, jun. Isaac Smith	6		2	1	65

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Addd.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Did.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Newbury and Newburyport }	JOHN PEAK Henry Merrill Bartholomew Hunt James Norris					43
3d Boston	Thomas Kendall Samuel Adams John Smith					24
		323	107	83	65	5056

N. B. The two last churches were received the present session.

4. Adjourned until half past eight o'clock to-morrow morning. Brother Cornell concluded by prayer. Sermon in the evening by Brother Blood, from Prov. xvii. 17. *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*

WEDNESDAY, September 9.

Prayer meeting attended in the meeting-house at six o'clock, A.M.

5. Met according to adjournment. Prayer introductory to business by Brother Sawyer.

6. Received from sister Associations accounts as follows :

	<i>Letters.</i>	<i>Minutes.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>
From the Charleston	Letter	Minutes	_____
Philadelphia	_____	Minutes	§ _____
New-York	_____	_____	_____
Stonington	Letter	Minutes	Matthew Bolles
Woodstock	Letter	Minutes	_____
Bowdoinham	Letter	Minutes	ROBERT LOW
New-Hampshire	Letter	Minutes	OTIS ROBINSON
Groton Union Conf.	_____	_____	_____
Sturbridge	Letter	Minutes	THOMAS RAND
Shaftsbury	Letter	Minutes	CALEB BLOOD John S. Center.

7. The Circular Letter, prepared by Brother Bolles, was read and accepted; also the Corresponding Letter, by Brother Collier, was read and accepted.

8. Appointed brethren S. Nelson, Coombs, Abbot, and Paul, to visit the church at Marshpee, and inquire into its state, and report at our next meeting.

9. Appointed brethren Baldwin, Gano, and Baker, to count, apportion, and distribute the money collected for widows of deceased ministers.

§ Brethren Rogers and Wilson were appointed from this Association. The former came as far as Boston, but was under the necessity to return previous to our meeting; the latter came as far as Providence, and was there taken sick.

10. *Education Society.* Brother Boyd, the Treasurer, made the following communication of the state of the funds of the Society, viz. 1340 dollars bank stock, and 775 dollars in notes; total 2115 dollars. The interest of this sum is annually applied in assisting pious young men engaged, or proposing to engage, in the ministry, in obtaining an education. Will not the wealthy, who duly estimate learning, feel a high gratification in contributing or bequeathing something to this benevolent institution? Ten dollars were presented by Brother Gano, from a friend.

Chose the Rev. Joseph Clay and Deacon Josiah C. Ransford Trustees of this institution.

11. *Missionary Society.* Deacon Goodwin presented 100 dollars to the Treasurer, from donors unknown. The Chairman of the Society also stated, that he had a few days before presented the same sum to the Treasurer, from the same source. He also mentioned a number of handsome donations, from female and other societies, which had been received at the last annual meeting. The churches of Attleboro' and Patucket presented donations at this time. It is still recommended to the churches to aid and encourage this *evangelic institution*, either by subscribing or contributing to its funds. To all the patrons of this and the Education Society, we tender our grateful acknowledgments.

12. Voted, that the Committee appointed last year on the difficulties between the first and second churches in Chelmsford, be continued, and that they report at the next meeting of this Association.

13. Appointed brother Oliver Holden to write the Circular Letter; and Brother Batchelder, of Haverhill, to prepare the Corresponding Letter.

14. Chose the following brethren Messengers to sister Associations. To the New-York, Brother James Woodbury. To the Woodstock, Brethren Baldwin, Andrews, and Stone. To the Bowdoinham, Brethren Robinson, Bently, and Paul. To the Groton Union Conference, Brother Abbot; and also to the Strubridge. To the New-Hampshire, Brethren Batchelder and E. Nelson. To the Shaftsbury, Brother Cornell. To the Danbury, Brother Bradley.

15. Voted, that the Committee appointed last year to prepare a Catechism, be continued for the same purpose. Brother Clay is hereby appointed in the room of Dr. Stillman, deceased.

16. Voted, to hold our next Association at the Baptist meeting-house in Newton, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September next, at two o'clock, P. M.

17. Appointed Brother Clay to deliver the introductory sermon; in case of failure, Brother Batchelder of Haverhill.

18. Voted, that if any church shall omit sending either Messengers or Letters to the Association, for three years successively, that they be dropped from the Minutes.

The business of the Association being finished at one o'clock, the Moderator closed with a very solemn and interesting address to the Association, and to the spectators; commending them by fervent prayer to the gracious benediction of Almighty God.

As a council had previously convened by the request of the Second Baptist church in Boston, and had attended to the usual modes of examination; at half past three o'clock the people assembled again, and Brother William Bently was ordained to the *work of an Evangelist*. Brother Collier addressed the throne of grace; Brother Grafton preached from 2 Cor. x. 4; Brother Blood prayed at the laying on of hands; Brother Baldwin delivered the charge; Brother Batchelder gave the right hand of fellowship; and Brother Peak made the concluding prayer.

During our present interview, God has not left himself without witness, in that he hath done us good, filling our hearts with spiritual food and gladness; and crowning our meeting with loving kindness and tender mercy.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The MINISTERS *and* MESSENGERS *of the* WARREN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION *to the several* CHURCHES *whom they represent.*

BELOVED BRETHREN,

WE are all to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; which consideration at times irresistibly forces the question upon the mind; how shall I appear there? It may be thought that as Christians, who have believed unto salvation, you are competently instructed upon the subject, and that no unworthy suspicions can arise to molest your peace. To some, indeed, it is given to have a mind so perfectly established with *grace*, that this question occurs without painful effect; but to others who are conscious of sin, unworthiness and imperfection, and are not favoured with so clear and discriminating views of the plan of justification, it is otherwise. They are embarrassed with what they discover in themselves, and are prone to connect with their acceptance before God, a necessity of some personal righteousness. A frequent recurrence to what is offered in the gospel upon this subject is therefore indispensable; and in no passage is truth more explicitly stated than in the following inference of St. Paul. *We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* A few observations, explanatory of the nature of justification, without the deeds of the law, we hope will not be unacceptable at the present.

Justification, as St. Paul viewed it, is an act of condescending grace in God, by which the sinner is freed from the condemnation of sin, and entitled to everlasting life.

1st. It is of God. "It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" Others may pretend to justify us, but without effect, "for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" And if they do not know and appreciate the positive disposition of the heart, it is a small thing to be judged of them. The Christian is aware of this, and cannot rest his hope upon the opinion of the most experienced, without the witness in himself. We may justify ourselves, but it will be equally unavailing. The Pharisees exemplified this, to whom Christ said, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts."

2d. Justification is a change of our *moral condition*. He that was afar off and in a state of alienation from God, is brought nigh and received into favour. For the want of a right understanding of this, some have conceived justification to be the same as sanctification, a progressive work, and of course, that we gradually come to the enjoyment of full acceptance with God. But if they perceived, that justification is a change of our moral state, and not

of the disposition, (though this always accompanies it) they would also perceive that it is a judicial act, and completed at once. He that believeth is passed from under the law, and is under grace; as it is said "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." No sin can be attached to them in such a manner as to prove their ruin; for, "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect; whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This is further confirmed by observing,

3d. That in justification, our sins are pardoned, and our iniquities remembered no more forever. This is not the effect of a sovereign dispensation at the expense of justice; but is in perfect consistency with that plan of grace, confirmed to us by the revelation of Jesus Christ, who, though he knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

II. We may inquire wherein it appears that we are justified by *faith*. It may not be amiss to observe here, objectively,

1st. That it cannot be by faith as a meritorious cause, since grace, which excludes merit, forbids. Accordingly we have it written, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." This blessing "is of faith, that it might be by GRACE, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

2d. Neither is it by faith as a virtue in us, or an exertion put forth by us; which would be making something in or of the creature, the ground of his acceptance. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."

3d. We are justified, it appears, by faith, only because through this medium we receive "the Lord our righteousness." We apprehend Christ as the way, the truth, and the life, and because united to him as the branch is to the vine; and being united to him, who is head over all things to the church, we are made partakers of his fullness and glory.

III. But if we are justified by faith, how is it without the deeds of the law? Is the law violated or overlooked? Not at all. Justice and truth meet together in the face of Jesus, who is our advocate and redeemer. The meaning of the passage is, that in justification, no respect is had to any goodness inherent in us; which sense is supported by the apostle when he says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness." It is without the deeds of the law, because salvation by grace and the works of the law are opposites; one necessarily destroys the other. "if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." The truth is, there has been no law given by which man could be justified, since his apostasy; for had there been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should

have been by the law. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law; for Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil. And this is the covenant, said he, that I will make with them, (viz. his people) After those days, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them: not as a covenant of life, but as a rule of duty and obligation. In this view of the law, it is precious to the Christian, and is his meditation and delight.

Thus, brethren, have we briefly sketched the scriptural method of justification, in which it is important we should be firmly established. It necessarily excludes some of those theories, which tend to harass and perplex the soul, but which have been obtruded upon mankind in every age. If Israel, who followed after the law of righteousness hath not attained to the law of righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the deeds of the law, what hope have we? If Paul, who was an Hebrew of the Hebrews and as touching the law blameless, counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, should not we? O Christians, let no one rob you of your peace by persuading you to attach for a moment the filthy rags of your self-righteousness, to the spotless and perfect robe of the Saviour, in which alone we can be presented to the Father with exceeding joy. The ground which is here taken marks out the only hope we have for ourselves or others to be reconciled to God. How discouraging is the opposite sentiment, and fatal the consequences that attend it! With a disposition naturally to seek justification by the law, the soul that is encouraged in this work, may labour through time without rest, and perish eternally without remedy. But thanks be to God, who hath revealed to us the method of pardon and justification through his dear Son, and taught us to embrace it. He saw our ruin, and was moved to pity; he beheld our helplessness, and came down to deliver.

“No more, my soul, attempt to draw
Thy life and comfort from the law:
Fly to the hope the gospel gives;
The man who trusts the promise, lives.”

We rejoice, dear brethren, to hear of your steadfastness in the truth, and persevering resolution to observe the new commandment which Christ hath given us, i. e. to love one another as he hath loved us. The letters from the churches are pleasing and give us reason to believe that the Spirit of God still dwells in the midst. O brethren, hold fast your faith and integrity: let no man take your crown. Soon shall we finish our course: may it then be our unspeakable privilege to enter into the joy of our Lord, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The WARREN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, met at the Baptist Meeting-House in SALEM, State of MASSACHUSETTS, September 8 and 9, 1807, to the ELDERS and BRETHREN of our SISTER ASSOCIATIONS, sendeth Christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

IN all societies there are certain principles of union. A correspondence of sentiment, feelings and design induce men to associate for their individual benefit, and the general good. The Christian Fraternity is a "union of honest men." There is something peculiarly beautiful and interesting in their fellowship. Influenced by the same sentiments, animated by similar feelings, supported by the same hope and aiming at the same end, the glory of God in the salvation of men; they feel united by everlasting bonds. Their fellowship is of a much sublimer kind than earth affords. No association of men, whose views are confined to this terrestrial globe, can know their blessed union.

If we were to trace the extensive correspondence of real believers of all denominations to its commencement, we are persuaded it would be found to have originated in their union to their heavenly Father. They have fellowship with him and with his Son Jesus Christ, to whom they are united as the branch is to the vine; and also communion with the Holy Ghost, and therefore have fellowship and correspondence with one another. They are embarked in the same cause; bound to the same haven; travelling to the same country. Their joys and sorrows, so far as they are made acquainted with each other's circumstances, are the same. The mystical body of Christ is composed of many members; and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. How interesting then must be the epistolary correspondence of the saints, as by this mean they become acquainted with the state of religion in various parts of the world, and with many of the followers of the Lamb, whose faces they never saw nor ever will see in the flesh, and of whom perhaps they otherwise never would have heard, till they heard their songs of free, sovereign grace, in the general association and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.

From an experimental view of this peculiarly delightful subject the apostle John was led to say, that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Man, in a state of innocency, enjoyed fellowship with his Maker; but by the fall he lost all communion with God, became totally corrupt and morally dead in trespasses and sins. The gospel is cal-

culated in its nature and design to reconcile us to God, and bring us into fellowship with him, in a way (mysterious indeed!) that permanently unites us to the Divine Nature. If, beloved brethren, we have true gospel fellowship with God and with one another, we rejoice in his being and perfections, approve his government, and adore the wonders of his love. We also have fellowship with his Son; i. e. approve the whole of his mediatorial character, in the exercise of his prophetic, priestly and kingly offices.

The way in which the saints are brought into this fellowship is by the agency of the Holy Ghost. God is love; and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us: and therefore they have the fellowship or communion of the Spirit. They are the subjects of his regenerating grace; they rejoice in his dispensation and work, and look to him, to lead them into the sublime mysteries of gospel truth. And hence they who walk in the light, and have fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have fellowship one with another. Their doctrine of faith is the same; the hope of their calling is the same; the ordinances they practise are the same; their sufferings, dangers, joys and prospects are the same.

This fellowship, brethren, is very extensive; it embraces Jews and Gentiles, all who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb from every kindred, tongue and tribe. This is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, but is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles, all the nations of the earth, should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. Hence he hath commanded those who are divinely commissioned, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Our minutes, brethren, which accompany this epistle, will inform you particularly of the visible success which hath attended the preaching of the word among us the year past; and give you some idea of the state of the churches in our connexion. While we rejoice in the goodness of God in general, which we have experienced, we have been called to mingle our sympathetic tears with some deeply afflicted. Two of the brightest luminaries in our denomination are hid from the view of mortals by the curtain of time! While talents, learning, and experimental piety are esteemed among us, the names of BACKUS and STILLMAN will be remembered with the tenderest affection.

Brethren, we entreat you to pray for us, and for Zion universally. Our Lord hath taught us to say, *thy kingdom come*. We feel united to you in the fellowship of the gospel, and wish to continue, in this way, our friendly intercourse, till our correspondence on earth shall be superseded by a participation of the fellowship of the saints in heavenly bliss. Brethren, farewell.

STEPHEN GANO, *Moderator.*

THOMAS BALDWIN, *Clerk.*

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A Discourse, delivered in the First Baptist Meeting-House in Boston, on Wednesday, August 19, 1807, by Joseph Clay, A. M. on the occasion of his Installation to the Pastoral Care of the First Baptist Church and Society in said town.

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