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Baptists. South Carolina. Bethel Association.

Minutes ... at the Baptist Church, on James Creek ...

August 13, 1791.

Charleston, 1791.

JCB copy.



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MINUTES

OF THE

BETHEL ASSOCIATION,

*Held at the Baptist Church, on Jamey's Creek, Spartanburgh County,
South-Carolina, begun on Saturday, August 15th, 1791.*

1. **T**WO first days were spent in public devotion.

MONDAY, August 15th.

2. Rev. Henry Holcombe delivered an introductory discourse from John, Chap. III. V. 17.

3. Letters from eighteen churches were read, and the names of their delegates enrolled.

4. Rev. Joseph Camp, was chosen moderator, and Mr. William Ford, clerk.

5. Rev. Messrs. Henry Holcombe, Joshua Palmer, and Gabriel Gerrald, attended as messengers from the Charleiton Association, and delivered a letter and the minutes of their last meeting, which were severally read. In consequence of a request made by this association to that of Charleiton, these gentlemen were unanimously and affectionately received into union and communion with us, and took their seats accordingly.

6. Six churches applied for admission into this association, and satisfactory information being given by their delegates, of their faith and order, they were received into our union.

Adjourned till to-morrow, at 9 o'clock.

TUESDAY, August 16th.

Met according to adjournment.

7. The committee appointed at the last association, to enquire into the state of the church at Dirty creek, reported, that the said church had dissolved itself in a very disorderly manner, and they had recommended the minority, or orderly members, to become members of some regular church:

8. Rev.

8. Mr. Jacob Roberts, at the request of some of the members of his church, was introduced, and desired a revival of the proceedings of this association, held at Cedar Spring in 1789, respecting his case. The association taking the same into consideration, proposed, that the members present, who were principally concerned in bringing forward allegations against Mr. Roberts should withdraw, and a second hearing be given; provided, he would resign himself to the counsel and admonition of the association. Mr. Roberts refused to acquiesce in the proposal, it was therefore agreed, that he be considered out of our union, and that our brethern be recommended not to attend his ministry.

9. It being represented, that a certain Mr. William Bennet, under sentence of excommunication, by an orderly church in North-Carolina, is now preaching in this vicinity, we hereby warn our churches against him.

10. The association having received information, that some transactions had taken place in the church at Horn's creek, respecting Mr. Hezekiah Walker, of which he is a member, which are said to have produced satisfaction respecting the charges brought against him, of which they had not received information at the last meeting, they think proper to desist from any farther proceedings in the business respecting him.

11. Appointed Rev. James Fowler to prepare the circular letter, and Rev. Alexander M'Dougal to write to the Charleston Association.

Adjourned till to morrow, 9 o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, August 17th.

Met according to adjournment.

12. Resolved, that Rev. Messrs. Joseph Camp, William Woodward, Richard Shackelford, Alexander M'Dougal, John Hightower, and Alexander Davidson, or any three of them, be a committee, to meet the second Saturday in October next, at Middle Fork church, Saluda, to enquire into some disorders now existing in that church—to use their influence to remove them, and report their proceedings at the next meeting.

13. Quere, by Sandy Run church. May a person who has been a minister, and has fallen into gross and scandalous crimes, for which he has been excommunicated, after professing repentance, and restoration to fellowship with the church as a private member, be permitted to pray, exhort and publicly lecture in the church? Answer. It is the opinion of the association, that he should be silent, unless he is fully restored to the ministerial office; which restoration should never take place but with great caution, and in a manner that should give the most public and general satisfaction to the churches and ministers in union.

14. Quere. Is it agreeable to gospel order, to ordain a minister to the pastoral charge only? Answer. We conceive the ordination on ministers to the

the charge of particular churches may be the ordinary method designed in the gospel; but in extraordinary cases, we think they may be otherwise ordained: eminent abilities and great prudence, with the particular call of providence, seem necessary qualifications in the subjects of such ordination.

15. **Quere.** Has a church the power of imposing restrictions or giving particular instructions to a licensed minister, who is a member thereof, respecting his going out to preach; or does that power properly belong to the association? **Answer.** The church of which he is a member, hath the power; but it is highly advisable, that in sending out persons as licensed preachers, the church should consult neighbouring churches and ministers of ability and reputation.

16. On motion, That a committee be appointed for the ordination of ministers, it was agreed, that the consideration thereof lay over until next meeting.

17. On motion, That a day of thanksgiving be appointed for the blessings of peace, harmony and concord, enjoyed among ourselves, and for the union and good correspondence subsisting between us and the Charleston Association; it was voted, that the first day of January next, be observed by all our churches, as a day to be devoted to this important purpose.

18. On motion, That a person be appointed to receive such moneys as may be collected for the use of the association, and keep an account of the receipts and disbursements; it was agreed to, and Mr. William Ford was accordingly elected.

19. Rev. James Fowler and Mr. David Lilly are appointed our messengers to Charleston Association, which is to assemble at the Welch Neck, Pedee, on the Saturday preceding the first Sunday in November next.

20. Agreed to the following supplies, Padget's creek church, Rev. Messrs. William Woodward and Reuben Rowland. Cedar Spring, Rev. Messrs. Alexander M'Dougal and Richard Wood. Bill's creek, Rev. Perimter Morgan. To attend discretionally.

21. Money was collected for printing the minutes. Rev. James Fowler is requested to superintend this business, and to distribute them when printed.

22. Agreed to hold our next association at the place of our present meeting, to begin the Saturday before the second Sunday of August next.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

*Ministers names in capitals; licenced preachers in Italics; churches marked with an asterisk * we had no account from, their numbers found as last year; ministers and others distinguished with an obelisk † were absent; a dash — denotes a vacancy.*

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized	Ad. I.	I. m.	Ex. op.	Died.	Number	Members							
Buffalo,	{ JOSEPH CAMP <i>William Wilkey</i> William M ^r Brayer	1			0	3	44								
									Tyger River,	{ George Brutan, Wm. Ford <i>Edward Williams</i>	5	9	1	83	
Bill's Creek, N. C.	{ Joel Shelton, John Owensbey John Whitesides	13	25	1	2	1	81								
									Reedy Fork, Buck Creek,	{ John Ford, William Cotton JOHN HIGHTOWER THOMAS MUSICK <i>David Forest</i>	13	6	1	2	1
Head Enoree,	{ Alexander Davidson Houlen Harrold	1	2	1	3	23									
								Sandy Run,	{ ISAAC EDWARDS ALEXANDER M^r DOUAL William Woolbanks	1	3	1	1	49	
Fairforrest,	{ Nathaniel Jackson PERMINTER MORGAN Joseph Tayler, Wm. Hill	13	13	6	2	35									
								Padget's Creek,	{ MOSES HOLLAND John Nicholson	2	4	3	1	31	
Mountain Creek,	{ JAMES CHESTAIN John M ^r Cutchen	3	7	1	1	28									
								Big Creek,	{ Joseph Taylor ----- George Marchbanks	3	2			29	
Genellie,	{ Thomas Camp Daniel Ford														
								Horse Creek,							
		52,72		34		24									

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	W.	S.	P.	W. M.	W. W.	Members
Brought forward		5		24	24	11	63
Cedar Spring,	{ Jesse Connel						19
	{ Toryal Barnett						
	{ Charles Smith						
Upper Duncan's Creek,	{ Thomas Euwen						21
	{ Rodger Brown						
Parolet,	{ RICHARD WOOD			1			39
Lower Duncan's Creek,	{ MICAJAH BENNET						46
	{ Reuben Rawlins	17			2		
	{ RICHARD SHACKLEFORD						
Janey's Creek.	{ David Lily	29	21	4	3	5	150
	{ Joseph Woodruff						
	{ JAMES FOWLER						
Sandy River,	{ WILLIAM WOODWARD	6			3	1	81
	{ William Embry						
Buth River,	{ JOHN COLE						80
	{ Joseph Johnston	10					
Siconna,	{ William Murphy						15
	{ Joseph Duncan						
Rockey Creek, Catawba,	{ EDWARD PIGG						26
	{ Charles Pigg						
	{ Arthur Shuffield						
Reedy River,	{ EDMUND BEARDEN						40
	{ Bayles Earles						
	{ Henry Mitcham						
Big Branch, Enoree,	{ DRURY SIMMS						15
	{ Hudson Barry						
Green River,*	{ Richard Newport						70
	{ Samuel M'Brayer						
Middle Saluda,*	{ JOHN CHASTAIN						70
Buffalo Branch,*	{ Jesse Temple						25

Increase since last year, 222.

116|94|40|32|19|1360.

C I R C U L A R L E T T E R.

The Bethel Association convened on Tyger river, the second Saturday, August, 1791, to the churches they represent, your greeting :

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHERN IN THE LORD,

WE are sure you will join with us, and with grateful affection and holy surprise exclaim, "great is the goodness of our God;" certainly we have reason to say, with greater emphasis and astonishment than the apostle, "Behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." O that we may always feel a disposition of soul to acknowledge, that "it is by his grace we are what we are." We have enjoyed a peculiar pleasure, in being permitted to meet and continue several days together, as your delegates, transacting the business which came before us, as appears in our minutes, with much sincerity and brotherly affection.

May the God whom we serve, crown our endeavours, for your present and eternal welfare, with abundant success!

The Lord knows it is your peace and prosperity we ardently desire, it is not for yours, but you, we labour; we owe you duty and affection as fellow creatures, and fellow citizens, and might be charged with a very culpable insensibility, were we not to feel, and endeavour a discharge of these obligations; but our more endearing relation to you, as members of the same religious community, and children of the same father, interest us still more peculiarly in your happiness. We thank God for your full and peaceable enjoyment of civil and religious liberty: You have no arrogant, and cruel tyrants to restrict you in your privileges, or make you afraid. Through a series of benign dispensations, under the direction and controul of our heavenly father, we are destitute of no real blessing, or valuable immunity; and though naturally prone to consume such mercies on our lusts, by preventing and renewing grace, we are called and enabled to make a rational use of them, in the delightful way of wisdom, virtue and happiness. O with what holy wonder and joy should we behold the introduction of divine light, and the increase of our redeemer's kingdom, which consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy ghost, among the children of men! The fellow ship we have obtained with the Charleston Association, must give great satisfaction to every generous and catholic spirit concerned, and diligently engage us in the use of all means, tending to the farther consolidation of this desirable union. O that our feeble, but we hope, prudent and pious exertions for the honor of God and religion in these transactions may give proper evidence to the world of our union with the great and glorious head of the church, and of our concern for the interest of his kingdom! To this important end, permit us, brethren, to beseech you to use all the means of improvement, be tender

tender one of another, "forbearing and forgiving one another." Use your power in discipline prudently and cautiously, as in the fear of God, for edification, and not for destruction: Encourage orderly gospel ministers, and discourage, the opposite character; let children and servants be carefully instructed, and your families will both have more the appearance of churches, and enjoy the blessing which belongs to them; use moderation to those who differ from you in religious opinions.

And finally, endeavour to make it manifest to the world that christians are the best citizens, best neighbours, husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, and servants. This will strenghten the hands of ministers, stop the mouths of gainsayers and give glory to God. Remember the kingdom of heaven is within you, the seeds of happiness are sown here in personal holiness, which shall produce a harvest of everlasting felicity: Grace is glory begun; and glory, grace consummated. We conclude with requesting your prayers, and styling ourselves yours, in gospel bonds.

JOSEPH CAMP, *Moderator.*
WILLIAM FORD, *Clerk.*