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Baptists. South Carolina. Bethel Association.

Minutes ... at the Baptist Church, on Jamey's-Creek

... August 10, 1793.

Charleston, 1793.

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 10th, 1793.*

1. **T**HE two first days were spent in public devotion.

MONDAY, August 12.

2. Rev. Edmund Botsford delivered an introductory discourse, from Col. 1 chap. 28 v. *Whom we preach.*

3. Letters from 29 churches being read, the names of their delegates were enrolled.

4. The Rev. James Fowler was elected moderator, and Mr. William Ford, clerk.

5. Rev. Messrs. Edmund Botsford and Benjamin Mosely, delivered the minutes of the Charleston Association for the last year, as their messengers to us; their letter unfortunately miscarried; and Rev. Messrs. Thomas Mercer and James Mathews, delivered a letter from the Georgia Association, as their messengers: and took their seats accordingly. The minutes and letter, being read, gave general satisfaction.

6. The ministering brethren providentially present, not messengers from churches, were invited to take a seat amongst us.

7. Seven churches applied by letters and messengers, for admission into this association, and satisfactory information being given of their faith and order, they were received into our union.

8. On motion, agreed, That Rev. James Fowler prepare the circular letter, Rev. Alexander McIougal write to the Charleston, Rev. David Lilly to the Georgia Association, and Mr Bayles Earles, to the General Committee of Baptist Association in Virginia. Adjourned.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 13, 10 o'clock,

9. On motion, by Mr. Roger Brown, agreed to request Rev. Mr. Botsford to favour us with a copy of the introductory sermon, for the press, which was granted.

10. The committee appointed at our last session to settle a difference between Genesee and Shackle-ferry churches, report, that it is happily removed.

11. *Quere*, from French Broad church: Can a man, having two wives, be admitted into the union of our churches? Answer, he cannot.

12. *Queries*, from Buffaloe church: 1, what shall be done with negro professors, that have been married (in their way) and separated by compulsion: May they marry while their wives or husbands are yet alive? Laid over till next meeting. 2, Where a master, and negro servant, are both members in a Gospel church, is the master justifiable in correcting the servant with stripes, for disobedience. [This question was argued and determined; but as it will be brought forward again at the next association, it was thought proper to suspend the answer until then.]

13. *Queries*, from Mountain and Duncan's creek churches, united: Where ministers are found guilty of atrocious crimes, and excommunicated, can they be restored to the ministerial office; and if restored, what method is most advisable to be pursued by the church? Answer, there appear to be some cases in which the crimes of persons, who have been admitted into the ministry, are too great, or their character rendered too suspicious, for them ever to be admitted into the ministry again. And where, in any instance, they have been so great as to deserve and incur excommunication, the utmost caution should be used in their re-admittance. In all such cases, we would recommend the calling of ministerial helps by the church.

14. *Quere*, from the Fairforest church: Can a person who hath been baptized by a Pedobaptist, in the order of immersion, on the credit of his faith, be received as a member in fellowship, without being re-baptized? Laid over for farther consideration.

15. *Quere*, from Keewee church: Can the testimony of a person of a good character, though not of our denomination, be received, to lay a member under censure? We answer, as in the 7th of the minutes of 1790, it may. Adjourned till to-morrow.

16. *Quere*, from Padget's creek church: What authority have we to give the appellation of reverend to a minister of the Gospel? Laid over till next meeting.

17. *Quere*, from Middle Fork Saluda church: Doth public transgressions require private dealings? Answer, no.

The

18. The circular letter, and the letters to the several associations, were brought forward, read and approved. Rev. Messrs. James Fowler and Alexander M'Dougal appointed our messengers to the Charleston Association, to convene at the High Hills of Santee, Saturday, before the first Lord's day in November. The Rev. Messrs. David Lilly and George Tilman, to the Georgia Association, to convene the third Sabbath in October.

19. Agreed that the rev. Messrs. John Chaistain, George Tilman, and Moses Holland, be a committee to enquire into the state of the Genistee church, and make report of their proceedings at our next meeting.

20. Collected the money for printing the minutes; rev. James Fowler is requested to superintend their printing, and to distribute them when done.

21. Supplies to the vacant churches. Paget's-creek church, Joshua Pa'ner, Alexander M'Dougal, Reuben Rowland; Cedar-spring church, Thomas Burges, Richard Wood; Branch of Pacolet church, James Fowler, Alexander M'Dougal, and Davis Collins; to attend discretionally.

22. Agreed, that our next association be held at the old Meeting-house, on Fairforest, near col. Brandon's, in Union-county, second Saturday in August, 1794.

JAMES FOWLER, Moderator.
WILLIAM FORD, Clerk.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

Ministers names in capitals; Licensed Preachers in Italics; Churches marked with an asterisk are had no account from, their numbers stand as last year; a dash denotes a vacancy.

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Ad. by L.	Dis. by D.	Trans. com.	Dis. by D.	Number Members.
Buffaloe Creek,	JOSEPH CAMP, James Collins						60
Tyger River,	William M'Daniel, William Ford	2	2	4	1		47
Green River,	DANIEL BROWN, John Blackwell	5		3	1		82
Bill's Creek,	{ John Owenby, Joel Shelton, Samuel King			2	1		31
Buck Creek,	THOMAS BURGESS, Wm. Garret	7	9	2		1	87
Head of Enoree River,	ABRAHAM HARGISS, John Tubbs	11	4	9	4	1	124
Sandy Run,	— Houten Harril, John Wilson		8	5			82
Fairforest,	{ ALEXANDER M'DOUGAL, Wm. Buchanan	1	7				7
Padget's Creek,	— John Putman, Wm. Woolbanks	1	2	4			15
Mountain Creek,	{ PERMINTER MORGAN, Joshua Taylor	12	7	4	6	1	114
Big Creek,	MOSES HOLLAND, John Nicholson	20	12	6	3		64
Genesie Creek,	— John M'Cutchen						41
Horse Creek,	— Drury Simms, Stephen Ford						29
Cedar Spring,	— Toroyal Barnett, Charles Smith	2	2	1			22
Upper Church on Dun-	{ JOSHUA PALMER, Roger can's Creek, Brown	3	16	1	1		28
Praolet River,	— RICHARD WOOD, Wm. Smith	2	16	1			56
Lower Church on Dun-	{ MICAJAH BENNET, Reuben Row- can's Creek, land, Abner Casey			4	2		37
Jamey's Creek,	{ RICHARD SHACKLEFORD, DAVID LILLY, Joseph Woodruff	11	18	7	3	2	227
Sandy River,	JAMES FOWLER, Wilson Henderson			5	3		79
Bath River,	JOHN COLE, Jessie Brooks	31		4	1	1	111
Siconna Creek,*	WILLIAM MURPHEY, Joseph Price		2	1		1	19
Rocky Creek of Catawba River,*	{ EDWARD PIGG						26
Reedy River, extinct.							
Big Branch of Enoree River,	{ DRURY SIMMS William Austen		1		1		19
Middle Branch of Saluda River,	{ JOHN CHASTAIN, Benjamin Stuart, Joseph Harden	1	17	11			100
Little River,	GEORGE TILMAN, William Gant	7	1	7	2	1	20
Enoree River,	Charles Coats, Edmund Gains	2	1		1	1	80
Branch Broad River,	{ RICHARD NEWPORT, Nicholas Woodson, John Boy	3	11	3	1		26
		117	140	78	43	5	1773

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Ad. by L.	Dismissed.	Excom.	Dead.	Number Members.
	Brought forward	117	140	8	43	9	1772
Rocky Creek of Broad River,	{ ——— Elijah Major George Vandeverc	2	2			1	77
Turky Creek, Main Saluda River,	Thomas Shirley, Thomas Foster ——— Wm. Thurston, Abraham Bradley	14	5	1		1	67
Cloud's Creek,	{ PATRICK QUARTEMUS Thomas Delcach						26
Bull Town, Kewee River,	——— Thomas Adams ——— James Abbett, Isaac Lynch						9 17
Concord,	{ EDMUND BEARDEN, Robert Smith Baylis Earles, Esq.						43
Catawba River, Sogar Creek,	——— Davies Collins, John Robertson ——— John Recker, William Petties						27 19
Increase since last year, 144, besides churches received.		123	147	79	46	11	2090

The CIRCULAR LETTER for 1793.

The Pastors, Ministers and Messengers, met in the Bethel Association, to the several Churches they represent, send Christian Salutation.

Holy Brethren, partakers of the Heavenly calling!

THE gracious and merciful providence of our Covenant-God, having brought us once more together as ministers and messengers of the respective churches, whom we have the honor to represent; we think it our duty to use every method that may conduce to your spiritual profit and edification; and, as the churches in confederation wait, with earnest expectation, for some instruction, information and advice, in matters that concern their present and future happiness.

The churches will reflect on the good providence of God, in bringing them together in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel. And now is an annual opportunity in receiving information of the state of the churches in union, together with intelligence from the associations in correspondence,

as may be seen in the minutes of our proceedings. No doubt you esteem it your happiness, to enjoy a place in the house of God; and say, with the Psalmist, Psalms 65, 4v. "Blessed is the man whom thou chusest and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of the holy temple." Dwelling in the courts of God is a continual attendance on him in the ministrations of his temple, and the discharge of some holy office there. This was the felicity of several of the priests and levites under the Jewish dispensation: And this is the happiness of ministers of the Gospel now, who are continually employed in the things of God, and the affairs of religion, who give themselves up, as the apostles did, to the ministry of the word, and to prayer, whose business it is to "attend to reading, to exhortation to doctrine," to meditate on God, on Christ and Salvation, to converse with the glorious invisibles of the upper world, and give themselves wholly to them, as the apostle charges Timothy, the young Evangelist. Blessed is the man whom the Lord chuseth for a Christian, and a minister, whose general calling, in common with the rest of Christians, is to save his own soul, and whose particular employment, as a minister, is to save the souls of others. This order of men are utterly unworthy of their privilege, if they do not prize it highly, set a just value upon it, and confess their own happiness. You who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and are brought near to God, by the atoning blood of Christ, and the sanctifying influence of the holy spirit, will desire to continue a fellow-citizen with the saints, and frequent the courts of God, attend on the worship of the church, and enjoy the special presence of God. God himself, in infinite condescension, makes a visit to families, and to closets, where prayer is performed, and comforts praying souls. But God dwells in Zion, "this is his rest forever, for he has desired it." Therefore, holy souls would dwell there also. David would have the ark brought to Zion, that "he might dwell with God: And he often longed to dwell in God's house." Peter was near God, on the holy mount, and was immediately for making tabernacles, and dwelling there. You that are satisfied with the goodness of the house of God, and dwell in his holy temple, have found the relationship, that God has assumed to you, already fulfilled, as a faithful creator, preserver, redeemer, and such like. Now you have put yourself under his care as the father of his family, master of his house, and king of his church; and when you wait in Zion, you humbly expect those promises made good, in which he hath said: "Psal. 132. 15, 16. *I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also be her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.*" And
 Psalm

Psalm 92: 10. *“Those who are planted in the courts of God, shall flourish and be fruitful there.”*

We say, that souls who have approached unto God, in divine ordinances, will obey divine commands: They who taste sacred pleasure will learn sacred duty; you that have received divine mercy will reverence divine authority: So the saints, mentioned by St. Paul, 2 Cor. “Gave their own selves first to the Lord, and then resigned themselves to the directions of the apostles, according to the will of God.”

Now, it is proper to put this question to our own souls: Do those of us, who are joined in holy fellowship, take pleasure in our station in the church, as it is an appointed means to encrease grace in us, and promote universal holiness, both of heart and life? Do we wait upon God in the solemn ordinances of the church, with an humble faith in his promises, that he will meet and bless us there? If answered in the negative; it is no wonder that we receive intelligence from the churches, of the fall of ministers and excommunicated persons. But, brethren, we hope better things of you as a body, though we thus speak as to individuals. Beware of spiritual slothfulness. Have a care of neglecting due seasons of worship, and be not unfrequent in your visits to the house of God, lest he lay some heavy restraints upon you, and divide you from his sanctuary. He has bands of various kinds to lay upon slothful professors; persecution, or sickness, loss of your limbs, or of your senses, whereby ye may be cut off from the blessings of the church; or, he may place your tabernacle afar off from his own, and cut short your liberty; for it is he who “determines the bounds of your habitation.” O, how unhappily are some persons overloaded with the cares of this life! How are they hurried and overwhelmed in a tumult of wordly affairs! And the business of their daily calling is too often ready to entrench upon divine hours and ordinances. How sore a distress it is to a pious christian to be confined and withheld from the courts of God, by long and tedious distempers of body! How painful it is to lie languishing and faint on a bed of sickness, while others drink of the river of pleasure, and refreshing treasures of the sanctuary; they are sorrowful, while others are made joyful in the house of prayer. They are tasting the wormwood and gall, while those, who from the heart, watch unto prayer, feed on the pleasant things of the “house of God, and are made satisfied with the goodness of his holy temple.”

Finally, brethren, as ye have hitherto paid a respectful attention to your duty, by representing your churches in association, we hope you will ever believe it to be your duty and great privilege, to persevere stedfastly in to
laudable

laudable a cause as that of promoting the interest and happiness of the church of Christ: "Wherefore, comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And, we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you; and esteem them very highly in love for their works sake. And be at peace amongst yourselves."

We crave an interest in your prayers, and remain your servants in gospel bonds,

JAMES FOWLER, *Moderator.*
WILLIAM FORD, *Clk.*

