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Baptists. South Carolina. Bethel Association, 1796.

Minutes . . . Jamey's Creek . . . 13th August, 1796.

[Charleston, 1796.] 7 pp.

JCB copy.

Rev. J. Mathews.

MINUTES

OF THE

BETHEL ASSOCIATION.

1. **M**ET at the Baptist Church on Jamey's Creek, Spartanburgh county, South-Carolina, 13th August, 1796. Brother Waller being appointed the last year to deliver an introductory discourse, and in case of failure Brother Joseph Camp to be prepared, neither of whom appearing, a discourse was delivered by Brother James Mathews, from Rev. I, chap. 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16th verses.

2. Letters from 47 churches were read, and the names of their delegates enrolled.

3. Brother Richard Shackelford was chosen Moderator, and Brother William Lancaster, Clerk.

4. The sabbath was employed in the exercise of public devotion, several sermons being delivered to a numerous audience, and the Lord's supper administered in the evening.

M O N D A Y.

Two churches applied by letters and delegates for admission into our union, and on satisfaction being obtained respecting their faith and order, they were received. The Rev. James Templeton, of the Presbyterian church, being present, was invited to a seat.

5. Brother David Cooper, messenger from the Charleston Association, handed a letter and minutes of last year; and Brethren James Mathews and Guy Smith, attended as Messengers from the Georgia Association, presented a letter, and took their seats accordingly. The minutes of the Philadelphia Association of the last year, and minutes of Neuse Association, North-Carolina, were handed by Brother Fowler, and being read, gave general satisfaction.

6. Appointed Brother James Fowler to write to the Charleston Association, and to be our Messenger to them. Brother John Bulger appointed Messenger to the Hephzebah Association, and Brother John Rooker to write to them. Brethren Joshua Palmer and Richard Shackelford appointed Messengers to the Georgia Association, and Brother David Lilly to write to them.

7. Agreeable

7. Agreeable to reference at the last meeting for a division of this Association, the subject was now taken into consideration, and after maturely investigating the same, it was thought advisable to postpone it to a future period.

Supplies to the vacant Churches that made application: Rocky Creek Church, Catawba River, James Fowler, John Rooker and Davies Collins, to attend discretionally. Supplies to French Broad River, Joseph Logan and William Murphy. Supplies to Poplar Spring Church: Joshua Palmer, Benjamin Northcut, George Tilman and John Rowland.

T U E S D A Y.

8. The letters to the corresponding Associations, and the Circular Letter, were read and approved by the Association.

9. Agreed that Brother David Lilly preach the introductory sermon at the next Association, and in case of failure Brother John Rowland to be prepared.

10. Agreed that Brother James Fowler write the Circular Letter for the next year; the subject to be on the assurance of grace. The money was collected for printing the minutes, and Brother Fowler requested to distribute them as usual.

11. Agreed that our next Association be held at this place, beginning the second Saturday in August, 1797.

Concluded with exhortation and prayer.

RICHARD SHACKLEFORD, Moderator.
WILLIAM LANCASTER, Clerk.

S T A T E

The STATE of the CHURCHES.

The Ministers Names are in Capitals; Licensed Preachers in Italics; Churches distinguished with an asterisk (*) we had no account from, their numbers stand as they did last year; Pastors to whose names an obelisk (†) is affixed, were absent; a dash (—) denotes a vacancy.

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Rec. by Letter.	D. Smitted.	Excommun.	Died.	Numbers.
Buffalo,	JOSEPH CAMP, James Bridges	3	3			1	59
Tyger River,	JOHN WILLIAMS, AUGUSTIN CLAYTON,	19	4	16		2	72
Green River,*	—, Samuel M ^r Brayer, John Blakewel,	7					43
Bill's Creek,*	—, John Owensby, M. Elliot,					1	35
Buck Creek,	ISAAC CANSRELT, THOMAS BURGESS, W. Garrat, J. Blakewell	4	6	17	2		128
Head of Enoree,	ABRAHAM HARGES, DAN. FLANNERY†, DAVID FO- RESTART†, Benjamin Bridges,	1	5	18	1		197
Sandy Run,	ALEXANDER DAVIDSON†, John Jones, Thomas Coventon,	11	11	8			77
Fair Forest,	ALEXANDER M ^r DOUGAL,			4	1	1	34
Padget's Creek,*	JOHN PUTMAN†, Spencer Bobot	1	1	3		2	65
Mountain Creek, N. C.	PERMINTER MORGAN†, William Hill, William Green,	1	4	2	2	1	112
Bigg Creek,	MOSES HOLLAND, James Wil- burn, George Vandewiert,	2	5	8	6	1	72
Horfe Creek,	—, Daniel Ford, Ambrose Hammond,	1	14				36
Cedar Spring,	—, Joroyal Barnet, William Lancaster,	1	14	2			35
Upper Duncan's Creek,	JOSHUA PALMER, JOHN RAWLIN, Reuben Kelly,	13	12	2	1		79
Pacolet,	—, John Palmer, Joshua Wilburn,		1	2			29
Lower Duncan's Creek,	MICAJAH BENNETT, Abner Casey, J. Speak,	6	2	6	2		59
Jamey's Creek,	RICHARD SHACKLEFORD, Joseph Woodruff, Tyrie Glenn,	6	2	16	1	2	172
Sandy River,	JAMES FOWLER, James Kolb,	2					74
Bush River,	JOHN COLET†, John Cannon, William Cole,			5	2	5	27
Sicona,	WILLIAM MURPHY, W. King,	4	10	2	1		27
		80	94	111	19	16	1492

Rockey

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Rec. by Letter.	Dismissed.	Excommun.	Dead.	Numbers.
	Brought over,	80	94	111	19	16	1491
Rockey Creek, Catawba,*	EDWARD PIGG†,						16
Big Branch, Enoree,	DRURY SIMMS†, Hudson Berry,	2					17
Middle F. Saluda,	Joseph Woolbanks,						
Little River,	JOHN CHASTAIN, John Young,						119
Enoree,	John Edens, Archibald Harris,						
French B. River,	GEORGE TILMAN, James	3	3	2	1	1	39
Rockey Creek, B. River,	Crowther, Joseph Kolb,						
Turkey Creek,	JACOB KING†, JESSE OWEN†		3			4	70
Main Saluda,	Edmund Kelly†, Barber Hancock,			5		2	22
Clouds Creek,	—, Jas. Blythe, Jas. Boydston,		1	6		4	54
Bull-Town,	—, John Larrowe, J. Newton,			9			50
Keowee,	BEN. NORTHCUT, E. Dadson,	1		6			14
Concord,	—, Jos. Willis, Wm. Thurston,						
Catawba,	—, John Stephens, Catlet	1	1		1	3	24
Sugar Creek,	Corley, Thomas Deloacht,						
Poplar Spring,	—, Haac Vernon,					1	9
Goshen,	JOSEPH LOGAN, Wm. Floyd,		1	5	1		12
Cabridge,	—, James Butler,	3	2	8	2		26
Shockley Ferry,	DAVIES COLLINS,						29
Mill Creek,	JOHN ROOKER, William Petties	3	5	1			32
Little Stephen's Creek,	—, Arthur Durham,	1		1			20
Coronaco,	—, Edmund Ellis, J. Headen,			2	2		38
Brush Creek,	DAVID LILLY, Richd. Moore,		2	1			23
Mountain Creek, S. C.	COOPER BENNET, T. Jones,	4	6	14	3		74
Little Horse Creek,	J. BULGER†, W. Hill, C. Davies,	4	1		1		43
Boiling Spring,	—, J. Bridges, Jonathan Essery		1	3	2		34
Bathabara,	—, William Long, John King,			2			20
Red Bank,	JOHN HOWARD†, James Head,	8	10	3	1		33
Hopewell,	James Satterfield, Robert Orr,						
Long Creek,	—, Jonathan Deweese,	1		1			12
Brushley Creek,	JAS. CHAISTAIN, J. Kinman,			12	2		25
	—, W. Brandon, W. Turner,	1	3	4			45
	JOHN WALLER†, William Ball,						
	William Beasley,	17	2				63
	—, Henry King, Bart. Bledsoe,			2	1	1	40
	—, William Hudson,	2				2	12
	—, Charles Jones, James						
	Weathers, Julius Holland,						64
	LEWIS RECTOR†, Abr. Carney,						19
		131	135	198	36	34	3596

The CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Bethel Association, met at the Baptist Church at Jamey's Creek, the 13th of August, and continued to the 16th, 1796, to the Churches they represent, sendeth Christian Salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

WE rejoice that the Father of Mercies has permitted us once more to meet, in order that we might unitedly pursue the promotion of that cause, which we believe is unspeakably precious to the churches we have the honor to represent. But the success of our feeble efforts to advance the important object in view, depends wholly on the blessing of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. To him, therefore, we humbly commit the concerns of Zion in general, and the transactions of this our meeting in particular; fervently beseeching him, that of his abundant grace and mercy he would grant that our labour may not be in vain in the Lord!

Notwithstanding the darkness and delusion of a sinful world, and the various imperfections of God's people in the present state, blessed be God, we are united in the leading and essential truths of divine revelation. And, therefore, on these important and glorious subjects, we can address you with greater freedom and pleasure. You will permit us this year to call your attention to the subject of good works, agreeably to our last year's appointment.

Works may be said to be good either in a natural, moral or spiritual sense. The actions which are under consideration, are such as are to be considered good in a spiritual sense, and proper to be performed by creatures endowed with reason, and accountable to God. Actions which are good in this sense, are such as are agreeable to the will of God revealed in his word. Good works are the performances of those which are good in the religious sense of the word. Goodness must first exist in the soul, before it can be expressed in life and conversation; as the tree must be made good before the fruit will be good.

JEHOVAH is the great and all-important object in the performance of good works. The beauties of the divine character, exhibited in the great atonement, impressed on the Believer's mind, lay him under a willing constraint to shun the paths of vice, and to be found in the ways of justice, mercy and truth. Though in the performance of good works, he is not wholly divested of a regard to self; yet, he is not merely influenced by a selfish gratitude, arising from reflections on the reception of past favours, by fond expectations of future enjoyments, or by a slavish fear of approaching wrath; but principally

cipally by the noble principle of love to the blessed God, on account of his spotless purity and the unchanging holiness of his nature. The believer, as far as his actions answer to the will of Heaven, directs his attention to the greatest possible good, as he pursues the divine glory. But, alas! after attending to the most unspotted characters in the Christian world, we must undoubtedly conclude, there is none who doeth good and sinneth not.

Good works are by no means the foundation of our justification in the sight of God. Nothing on earth, or in heaven, can be found to answer this glorious purpose, but the finished righteousness and atoning death of the great Immanuel God with us. Neither can we suppose, good works are the condition of our regeneration, or being called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel; nor can we ascribe a tribute of praise to ourselves, as being subjects of this great change, but all the glory is to be given to God.

Notwithstanding our salvation is not by works of righteousness performed by us, nor our regeneration on account of any previous good works; temper or conduct in us: Yet, we are to consider such as being under many obligations to the Father of our Spirits to devote themselves to the duties of religion.

We are not only to engage, but to persevere in the performance of good works, and as true and real believers attend to a steady perseverance in the way of righteousness, to brave every storm, baffle every hostile attempt, and finish our heavenly course with endless joy.

Dearly beloved, let us urge the importance of good works, and endeavor to excite you to a faithful performance of the same. Remember they are the duties you owe to God. Has God done such great things for us, and shall we fail to do the little we can for him? Would not a thousand lives spent in his service, and a thousand deaths suffered in his cause, be but a small testimony of our gratitude and love for his undeserved and matchless grace manifested in the eternal salvation of poor sinners who are doomed to utter woe?

The more diligent you are in the works of piety and mercy, the greater reason you have to expect God will confirm your minds in the truth, and give you the victory over your spiritual enemies; and, when brought to the shores of eternity, each of you may say with Paul, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.*"

We trust, beloved, you will not be offended if we conclude the subject by exhorting you to the performance of good works. You expect that your ministers will be diligent in every good work, which belongs to their pastoral office and concerns your spiritual and eternal welfare. If they should be found negligent and unfaithful, how great their guilt and how dreadful their doom, when the blood of immortal souls shall be required of them by their angry

Judge!

Judge! It certainly concerns them much to improve their time, to study to shew themselves approved, as workmen who need not to be ashamed before the awful tribunal at the last day. But in return, you must consider it your incumbent duty to strengthen their hands, by affording them a competent supply of the necessaries of life. For, if they have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if they should reap your carnal things? And has not your dear Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel? And can it be said you have diligently followed every good work, if you suffer your ministers to live in indigence, and their minds to be perplexed for want of those enjoyments of which God has granted you a rich supply? Provide houses decent and convenient for the public worship of God. Pay proper attention to the poor; but especially endeavor to relieve the wants of your needy brethren. Encourage family worship, and let not the duties of the closet be neglected. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves; but continue stedfast in the Apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers. Let proper discipline be attended to and supported: Let the respective members keep their places, and highly respect the government supported by the authority of God in the churches. Be at peace among yourselves; warn them that are unruly; comfort the feeble minded; support the weak; and be patient to all men. And blessed indeed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find **so doing.**

RICHARD SHACKLEFORD, Moderator.
WILLIAM LANCASTER, Clerk.