

S7927

Baptists. Massachusetts. Sturbridge Association, 1805.

Minutes ... at Wilbraham, September ... 1805.

n. p., [ 1805 ]. 7 pp.

MWA copy.

# MINUTES

OF THE

Sturbridge Affociation,

AT WILBRAHAM,

SEPTEMBER THE 25th and 26th, A. D. 1805.

WEDNESDAY, September 25th.

1. **A**T 2 o'clock brother Cornell preached the introductory Sermon from 2. Tim, II. 3.

2. Chose brother Waters Moderator and brother Leonard Clerk.

3. Read the letters from the churches, and took the following accounts.

N. B. The names of ordained ministers in capitals. Ministers with this mark \* not present. Licensed Preachers in italics.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Add.</i>	<i>Difs.</i>	<i>Excl.</i>	<i>Died.</i>	<i>Num.</i>
Sutton,	SAMUEL WATERS Johnathan Holman, Solomon Marble, Moses Putnam,	o.	o.	1.	1.	82.
Leicester,	* PETER ROGERS, David Livermore, David Bryant,	o.	o.	o.	1.	55.
Charlton,	JAMES BOOMER, David Bates, Daniel Bacon,	2.	2.	1.	1.	65.
Woodstock,	ROBERT STANTON, Samuel Crawford, David Howard,	o.	4.	o.	o.	38.
S. Brimfield,	* ELIJAH CODING, John Munger,	o.	2.	o.	1.	132.

Belcherstown,	SAMUEL BIGELOW,	o.	o.	2.	2.	36,
	JEREMIAH HASKEL,					
	Seth Edson					
Sturbridge,	ZENAS L. LEONARD,	1.	o.	o.	3.	94,
	Samuel Cheever,					
3 Ashford,	* DANIEL BOLTON,	o.	o.	1.	o.	25,
	Ephraim Howard,					
	Benjamin Owen,					
Shutesbury,	JOSEPH SMALLIDGE,	2.	2.	o.	1.	110,
Wilbraham,	SETH CLARK,	o.	o.	o.	o.	228,
	Ezekiel Terry,					
	Seth Clark, Jr.					
	Elisha Cleaveland,					
2 Ashford	JOHN RATHBUN,	o.	o.	o.	2.	51,
	Roswell Brown,					
	William Johnson,					
	Clark Robbins,					
Hardwick,	EBENEZER BURT,	3.	o.	o.	1.	45,
	JACOB WHIPPLE,					
	Moses Winchester,					
	Reuben Cooley,					
Thompson,	PARSON CROSBY,	1.	o.	3.	o.	108,
	Thomas Day,					
	Joel Wakefield,					
2 Woodstock,	AMOS WELLS,	3.	2.	o.	2.	165,
	JAMES GROW,					
	Robert Baxter,					
	William H. Manning,					
1. W. Spring.	JESSE WIGHTMAN,					42,
	John Porter,					
	Daniel Munger,					
2. W. Spring.	THOMAS RAND,					32,
	Austin Goodyear,					
2 Wilbraham,	STEPHENS SHEPARD,					75,
	Israel Bennet,					
	Aaron Chapin,					
	Nathan Pease,					

---

12. 12. 8. 15. 1433,

The three last churches were added this session.

4. Voted to adjourn till to morrow 10, o'clock A. M. There was preaching in several parts of the town in the evening.

THURSDAY September, 20.

Met according to adjournment.

1. Brother Cornell preached from Matt. 10. 16.

2. With gladness of heart we received brother Cornell a messenger from the Warren Association, and the minutes of last year. (Brother V. W. Rathbun being present was invited to take a seat with us :)—also brother Asa Hobard from the Leyden, with their minutes: also brother Asa Bennett from the Stonington: also brother Stephen Shepard from the Danbury, with their minutes.

3. The circular letter, prepared by brother Crosby, and the corresponding by brother Bolton, were read and approved, (being previously revised by a committee chosen for the purpose.)

4. Query from the Church at South-Brimfield. We desire an explanation of Mark 4. 12. Answer. This question involves a very important point of doctrine (viz) Sovereign grace. We recommend it, as a subject for our next circular letter.

Queries from the Church in Belcherstown.

1. Does this Association fellowship the conduct of a Church in allowing her itinerant ministers to administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to congregational Churches? Answer. No.

2. Has a Church a right to a seat in this Association which allows unbaptized persons to commune with them at the Lord's table, or allows their members to commune with unbaptized persons? Answer. No.

3. Has any Church a right to a seat in this Association which has not communed at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for the term of three or four years?

Answer. This Association claims no right to inspect particular Churches, with regard to their state, and travel, so long as they conform to the rules of the Association, by representing themselves by messengers and letters annually; and appear to hold the sentiments they professed, when they joined this body.

If one Church is jealous that another Church is deficient in duty, they have a right to enquire into their conduct. And if satisfaction is not obtained they may unite in mutual council. And the result of said council may be presented to the association as a guide to their future conduct toward that Church.

5. Chose brethren Leonard, Wells and Rand to the Warren Association; Wightman, Shepard and Crosby to the Stonington; Smallidge, Ben and Leonard to the Leyden; and Wells to the Danbury.

6. Chose brother Wells to write the circular letter, and brother Rand the corresponding letter for the next year.

7. Recommended to the Churches of this Association, to spend 4 days this year, in fasting and prayer, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, (viz.) The first Thursdays in October, January, April and July.

8. Our Association is to meet next year, the last Wednesday in September, at two o'clock P. M. at the Baptist meeting house in Thomson.

9. Voted that Brethren Leonard, Rand and Terry, superintend printing the minutes. Closed by prayer and singing.

.....

## CIRCULAR LETTER.

*The STURBRIDGE ASSOCIATION to the several CHURCHES, whom they represent; wishing Grace, Mercy, and Peace to be multiplied, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

DEAR BRETHREN,

**A**T the Close of this pleasing, and heart-animating, interview; permit us to call up your attention, to a few things, which we conceive to be of great importance, to you and us. We humbly trust and believe, that the Glory of God, and the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom on the earth, was our design, in forming this Association. And we sincerely hope the same motive will actuate us in all our consultations. We rejoice, with you, Dear brethren, in the enlargement of the Kingdom of our Divine Emanuel. While the tottering Kingdoms of this world are convulsed, and shaken; we hope the glorious time is not far distant, when they will become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ. May we not say with admiration; What hath God wrought! Even in this day, in which we live, how are the mighty walls of bigotry, and tradition broken down, and the mists of antichristian darkness, and human inventions driven back, by the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ? while multitudes are emerging from those dark shades, into the liberty of the gospel, and with gladness of heart commencing followers of the Lamb. How wonderfully is Jesus displaying the riches, of his sovereign mercy and grace, in bringing sinners out of darkness, into the marvelous light of the gospel! The Lord is on our side, now may Israel Say, Truly his

arm is made bare. He is gone forth with his bow and Crown, from Conquering to Conquer.

His arrows are sharp in the hearts of his enemies whereby the people fall under him. While the friends of truth, and the souls of men; both in Europe, and America, are unitedly engaged to spread the light of the gospel amongst the benighted Heathen; and many of our Dear Brethren have taken their lives in their hands, taking their final leave of their friends, and native Country have gone to bear the glad tidings of salvation to distant Nations, that sit in darkness, and are perishing for lack of knowledge; May the Lord prosper their way, and the blessing of many ready to perish come upon them.—In this glorious prospect, may we not adopt the language of the prophet, and say; Awake, awake O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem; shake thyself from the dust, and arise, yea arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Surely Brethren, it is time to trim our lamps, and have our lights burning; that we watch unto prayer, be sober and hope unto the end, for the grace that will be revealed at the appearance of Jesus Christ.—Let the ministers of the word take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, and continue therein, studying to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; never shunning to preach the heart-humbling doctrine of the Cross; and carefully, and faithfully administering the ordinances, as they were first delivered to the saints; ever labouring, in their lives, to confirm what they deliver from the pulpit.

Let the Churches be faithful to maintain strict gospel discipline, that the name of Christ, and his doctrine be not blasphemed. Withdraw yourselves from every professed brother, that walketh disorderly. Thus endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. Finally brethren, let us be steadfast unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; looking forward to that glorious day, when Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. Then, dear brethren, shall we awake in the likenesses of Jesus, and be satisfied. Yes, when that ultimate and everlasting *Economy* commences, our minds, being irradiated with *Divine truth* we shall be satisfied with what we *know*; perfectly possessing the *chief good*, we shall be satisfied with what we *enjoy*; conscious of *complete rectitude*, we shall be satisfied with what we *are*, and knowing our *obedience* to be *consummate*, we shall be sat-

filled with what we do. Delightful, ravishing thought! to have all our immortal powers expanded and filled with knowledge of the supreme truth, with love to the supreme beauty, with reverence to the supreme Lord, and with delight in the supreme good. This will complete the happiness of the redeemed. And this is the grand result of our Lord's dominion in the hearts of his people. To this therefore let us look, and upon this let us fix our hearts; that we may behave as the faithful subjects of Jesus, and finish our course with joy. Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.



## CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The ELDERS and MESSENGERS of the STURBRIDGE ASSOCIATION, to the ASSOCIATIONS with whom we correspond, sendeth christian salutation.

BELoved IN THE LORD,

**L**ET us remember, that the great Head of the Church hath formed his people for Himself, to shew forth his praise. And as his dove is one, we do well to remember, that no one member of the body is independent of the other; for we need each other's help; and we have, no doubt, opened a correspondence with each other for the mutual advantage of the whole. Let us remember that we are dependent on, and under law to Christ; from whom we have received the atonement. We ought to exercise our gifts for mutual edification; for the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal. Not to any man, however, out of Christ: but to all in Him. The Spirit, by the word shews us what we all are by nature and practice, and what we must be by grace. The Spirit is not partial; but guides into all truth. He searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. And as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God. Let us all endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. Our Great Leader has given us articles of faith, and it is our duty to hold fast our profession of them. Brethren, our eternal salvation de-

not depend on our notion of things : but on our union to Christ. If we are united to Christ, we shall bring forth fruit agreeable to our new nature. Let us avoid conforming to the world in their notion of the atonement, of election, of vocation, and all other branches of the doctrine of Christ. For when a blind man can form a genuine idea of colours, and a natural man discern the things of the Spirit of God, there will be a new thing under the sun. Let us be careful, that we do not exalt the creature's *free will* to the throne of God's *free grace*. Let us seek to please him, who hath redeemed us from among men. We have a pleasing opportunity of meeting our christian friends, from sister Churches, & conversing with them face to face, & of corresponding with sister Associations by letters, and messengers. But our local situations, and relative duties are such, *we must part* ; yet we hope shortly to meet in heaven, *never more to part*. And do we not feel our hearts burn within us, while Jesus is conversing with us by the way, and opening to us the scriptures? May the Lord preserve us all blameless, and present us spotless before the throne of his Glory, where are rivers of pleasure, and joys forevermore. Christ saith behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. We wish the continuance of your friendly correspondence. We subscribe ourselves your brethren in the same Faith and Order of the Gospel.

In behalf of the Association,

SAMUEL WATERS, *Moderator*.  
ZENAS L. LEONARD, *Clerk*.