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Baptists. New Hampshire. Woodstock Association, 1804.

Minutes . . . at Alstead, N.H. September . . . 1804.

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MINUTES

OF THE

WOODSTOCK ASSOCIATION,

HOLDEN AT

ALSTEAD, N. H.

SEPTEMBER 26 *and* 27, 1804,

WITH THEIR

Circular and Corresponding Letters.

KEENE, [N. H.]

PRINTED BY JOHN PRENTISS, FOR THE ASSOCIATION.
1805.

MINUTES

OF THE

WOODSTOCK ASSOCIATION.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 26.

AT one o'clock, P. M. the Association opened by public worship. Sermon by Elder Ariel Kendrick, from Song ii. 3. "*As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood; so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*"

Chose Elder Adriel Kendrick Moderator, and Elder Higbee Clerk.

Letters from the Churches were read, and the following list taken.

N. B. *Notes of distinction the same as usual.*

CHUR. RES.	MINISTERS & MESSENGERS.	Added.	Dismiss'd.	Excluded.	Died.	Total No.	Money.
Woodstock,	Jabez Cottle.	6	0	4	3	121	1
	Dea. Daniel Ralph.						
Newport,	*Bial Ledoit.	2	2	1	1	116	1
	Dea. J. Nettleton.						
	Asaph Stow.						
	Thomas Whiteher.						
†Royalton,	-----					16	
Windsor,	*William Ewing:	1	1			38	62
	Dea. Joseph Thompson.						
	Samuel Smith.						
	Jonathan Massa.						
Westmoreland,	E. Bailey.	4	2	2		60	32
	Nathaniel Wilbur.						
	John Patten.						
†Marlow,	-----					58	
Dublin,	Elijah Willard.	2		1		93	2
	Aaron Marshall.						
	Daniel Cummings.						
	William Balch.						

Churches.	Ministers & Messengers:	Added.	Dismiss'd.	Excommunicated.	Died.	Total No.	Money, D.	C.
Hopkinton,	_____	3		1		94	25	
Chester,	Samuel May. *Aaron Lealand. Dea. John Lawrence. John Kibling.	8	2		1	79	50	
Alstead,	Jeremiah Higbee. Moses Hale. John Cheney.	5	1		1	78	1	
New-London,	*Job Seamans. Ebenezer Shepard. John Adams, jun. Benjamin Woodbury, Penuel Everett.	4	1	6	1	108	1	10
Cornish,	Ariel Kendrick, Samuel Cummings.		1	1	1	53	68	
Mason,	*William Elliot. Dea Andrew Elliot. John Adams.	5		2	1	93	50	
Temple,	_____	7				28	50	
	Dea. Josiah Brown. Benjamin Prescott. Ebenezer Stratton. Ebenezer T. Woods.							
S Sharon,	_____					30		
Westminster,	_____	9				28	25	
Plainfield,	John Twitchell. *John Cram. Andrew Blunt.	1				60	50	
Crafton, N. H.	Joseph Wheel. Dea Elkanah Phillips. Jonathan Aldridge,	9			2	102	50	
Wardsborough,	_____	1			1	45	50	
	Paul Davis. Aaron Draper. Stephen Choat.							
Jamaica,	Simeon Combs. Aaron Knapp. Isaac Fisher.			3	2	98	32	
Hanover & } Lime, }	Isaac Bridgman. Dea, Shadrak Hill, Abel Franklm.	35	1	3		143	75	
† Lebanon,	_____					16		
† Chelsea & } Tunbridge, }	_____					42		
Reading,	_____				1	29	40	
	William White. John Moore.							
Canaan,	_____					38	50	
	Dea. Josiah Clark. Richard Whittier,							
† Pomphret,	_____					23		
Weathersfield,	_____					51	85	
	Dea. Beamon Boynton, Seth Houghton,							

Churches.	Ministers & Messengers.	Abel.	Ministers.	Excluded.	Died.	Total No.†	Money D. C.
Grafton, V.	Dea. William McCuller. Daniel Baker.	6				6	50
†Cavendish, Andover,	Dea. Joel Maning. Benjamin Taylor.					25	40
Gosben,	Dea. William Gunisan. Dea. Parker Tandy. Jonathan Sholes. Samuel Siseo.					15	50
Washington,	Abel Severance.					25	25
Sutton,	Dea. Benjamin Fowler. Jonathan Eaton.					33	50
		108	11	24	15	1944	15 06
	Money contributed last year, \$16,63						
	Expended, - - - 14,50						2 15
							Remains, - - - \$17 19

The three last Churches were added this season.

Adjourned to 8 o'clock to-morrow morning.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 27.

Met according to adjournment.—Meeting opened by prayer.

Received Messengers and Ministers from Corresponding Associations.

From Newhampshire, Elder Otis Robinson, with Minutes.—From Leyden, Elder John Humley, and Brother Christopher Bullock, with Minutes.—From Warren, Elders ~~Warren~~ and Bradley, with Minutes for two years.—From Vermont, Deacon Lewis Walker, and Brother Silas Address, with a Letter.—From Meredith, Shaftsbury, and Richmond, we received no intelligence.

Appointed Messengers to Corresponding Associations.

To the Warren, Elders Seaman and White.—To Newhampshire, Elders Willard and Bailey.—To Vermont, Elders Kendrick and Bradley, and Deacon Ralph.—To Shaftsbury, Brother Stephen Chat.—To

Leyden, Elders Bailey, Willard, and Combs.—To the Richmond Conference, Elder Jabez Cottle, and Deacon James Parker.—To Meredith, Elder Jabez Cottle.

The Circular and Corresponding Letters were read and approved.

Q U E S T I O N S.

By the Church in Windsor. Is it NECESSARY that Elders or Brethren become *Masons*?—Answered in the Negative.

By Mason Church. If no one knows my Brother guilty but myself, shall I bring it to the Church?

Answer. If the Brother offending acknowledges the fact, but denies the criminality; the case is plain that the Church may judge the cause: but in case the fault is denied, and no proof can be produced, the Brother offended must bear it as a burden.

By Plainfield. Does it agree with the doctrine or example of Christ, or his Apostles, for the Ministers of the *Gospel* to be Ministers of *State*; or to be in any Civil or Military office?

Answer. We conceive that those whom Christ has called into the Ministry, have enough to do in his Kingdom without being entangled with the affairs of this life; and much more with the offices of State. According to 1 Tim. iv. 15. to the end, and 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

Noted, That Elders Seamans, Kendrick and Higbee, be a Committee to form a plan for a Missionary Society, and present it at our next meeting.

The Association will meet at Newport, next year, on the last Wednesday in September, at one o'clock, P. M. Sermon by Elder Seamans—in case of failure, Elder Higbee.

Appointed Elder Seamans to write the Circular Letter, and Elder Bailey the Corresponding letter for next year.

Meeting closed by a Sermon by Dr. Baldwin, from Matt. vi. 13. "On this rock I will build my Church," &c.

The Warren Association sits next year at Warren, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September.

The Newhampshire ditto, at Epping, 2d Wednesday in June.

Circular Letter.

The Woodstock Association, sendeth christian love to the Churches of the connexion wishing that Faith and Peace may abound.

DEAR BRETHREN,

INFLUENCED (as we hope) by holy love, which ever aims at the declarative glory of God and the up-building of his visible cause in the world; we wish to exhort you to be faithful in the following duties. 1st Be wise to ascertain what the gifts of those Brethren are who attempt to speak in public.

A Brother out of his lot, and place in the Church is, to them, worse than out of the world. It is to be feared that some Brethren who have excellent gifts in exhortation, and can cut their way like a sword, are stimulated by some unwarranted ambition in themselves, aided by the imprudence of others to undertake the work of systematic, doctrinal preaching. To such their text proves a strong chain to bind them fast: they will use words, without knowledge, sentences without connexion; and will at one time, in preaching, confess what they have declared before and being confused in their own minds, they will confound their hearers. To unthinking mortals great zeal may answer in lieu of every thing, knowledge not excepted. But the judicious will say, "As a parable in a fools mouth; so are the words of him who undertakes to preach without a good degree of

knowledge in Divinity." It is of infinite importance, especially in this day of infidelity, and contradiction; that those who mount the sacred walls of Zion, should be well instructed scribes in the glorious mysteries of the kingdom of Grace. 2d. We think a reform is necessary, in many instances, respecting the support of our Ministering brethren. There are a solitary few who imbibe the notion that the Church is not obligated to a Minister, as such, respecting his support: which sentiment is, in our opinion as contrary to the Bible, as the human heart can be to christian liberality, and benevolence. Others consider assisting a Minister in temporal things, to be of the nature of alms deeds; which is a virtual adoption of the sentiment just condemned: for if he be assisted as a poor man, by alms, his support as a Gospel laborer is denied him. These two classes, with a third, all deny that a Church has a right to support a Teacher, in a regular systematic manner by agreeing that each one will pay his equal proportion of a necessary, and agreed to sum. and also, that every one shall honestly discharge his proportionable part, or be disciplined by the Church unless a sufficient reason, for delinquency, can be given. The Apostle exhorts to an equality in the Church, that one may not eased, and another burdened. This equality cannot exist in a Church unless the members contribute to the support of their Minister according to what they really possess: and it cannot be known that this duty is complied with, unless what each one does, comes under the cognizance of the body at large. Ministers and people, who do not submit to this scheme of support, may get along a few days; but their prosperity will be short, like the "joy of the hypocrite." In a time of general seriousness in a Town and Church they will, it is probable, be liberal to their preacher: but when coldness in religion prevails, covetousness will possess many hearts; and their alms will cease; their Minister is of course, neglected, and distressed; he will repair to some particular Brethren of superior benevolence, and reveal to them his wants; they will shed over him the tears of commis-

eration; and their friendly hands will be extended to his for his relief; imperious necessity will impel them to bear the heat and burden of the day alone; the Minister's charity for his delinquent Brethren will be struck with a deadly consumption, and union between the charitable and covetous members is palsied, the Elder leans on a charitable few until they are distressed, and he ashamed: he will complain to the Church, and begin, for the first time perhaps, to hold up the duty of a Church to their Teacher, and some of them will doubtless say, that his conduct symbolizes with the language of the "two daughters" of the "Horseleech, who cry give, give," confusion will reign in the Church, in every direction; the Elder must, of consequence, remove to some other place and preachers of erroneous sentiment will take his ground; and the Church will be wasted, and the enemy exclaim, ah ha, so would we have it. This awful picture is but a faint resemblance of the consequences which result from such confused, and hasty notions concerning the support of Gospel teachers. And now, dear Brethren, while we seriously exhort you on the one hand against legal religious establishments, and having recourse to the arm of civil power to support your preachers; we do, on the other hand, exhort you against anarchy. Take the word of God for your rule; make the support of your teachers a Church matter, proceed regularly, and discipline the covetous for their idolatry.

3d. We solemnly exhort you to a conscientious adherence to the great duty of family prayer. There are professors, in our denomination as well as others, who live in the almost total neglect of this christian duty, to the great dishonor of christianity. 4th. We earnestly entreat the Brethren to maintain an humble, close walk with God, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. God is permitting many strange errors to pervade this sinful world for the trial of the faith, and establishment of his people. We ought to remember that between the first departure from

the truth, and open infidelity, there are many intermediate steps, all connected, and tending the same way : we ought therefore to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. Many of the great, and learned characters of the day, like the Philosophers of St. Pauls time, despise the sacred doctrine of the cross : but while the proud sons of reason conduct thus ; the real enlightened christian, finding himself surrounded with a sea of wonders, displayed in creating power, governing wisdom, and redeeming grace, he will devoutly adore, and praise, where he cannot comprehend : and will cheerfully say, “ O the depth, both of the wisdom, and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable and his judgments and his ways past finding out ! ” Let us all pray for spiritual life, and engagedness in the cause of the great redeemer, that we may be like a city on an hill which cannot be hidden. Our time on earth must be short, and our work is great, we have no time to loose, but much to redeem. Let us labor in faith, that we may be accounted worthy to stand before the son of man in peace.

Now Brethren, we commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you inheritance among all them who are sanctified.---Farewell.

Corresponding Letter.

The Baptist Woodstock Association, convened at Alstead, September 26, & 27, 1804. To all the Associations with whom we correspond, Greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

THE Church of our Lord Jesus Christ is *one*. Though the branches are many, and the members nu-

merous ; yet all are, by faith, united to Christ the living head, and are members one of another. “ For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ.”

This divine oneness originates in regeneration, and is cultivated by the mutual correspondence of Saints. By this they become acquainted with the moral sentiments of each other, and are inspired to love one another, with a pure heart, fervently.

Hence arises that desire for friendly intercourse, and mutual correspondence which is, and ever has been, apparent in the conduct of Saints in all ages. To the truth of this we can testify by happy experience. And though local distance deprives us of the privilege of personal acquaintance with many of our dear Brethren ; yet we rejoice to maintain an Epistolary, and representative correspondence, as the best means to stimulate to Brotherly love.

The intelligence from the Churches in this vicinity, is not so flattering as in some seasons past. There have been no special revivals of religion, except in the small Churches of Westminster and Temple, on which, God has been pleased to cause some mercy drops to fall. Some of our Churches have been racked with the baneful influence of *heresy* operating under the false garb of religion, which proves far more fatal, than open opposition. But in general we remain steadfast in the great doctrine of *grace*, as when we opened correspondence with you, though we have great cause to lament a remissness in gospel discipline, and the want of a daily walk with God.

Our present session has been peculiarly agreeable, our deliberations have been calm, and (in general) harmonious, and Brotherly love has seemed to flow from heart to heart through the body, so that we were loth to part.

Your Letters and Messengers brought us much pleasing intelligence of the prosperity of Zion, and our

hearts were much refreshed while their doctrine dropped as the dew, and their Speech as the rain on the new mown grass.

We wish to continue our correspondence with you, and for an interest in your prayers that God will revive his work, and that his word may have free course and be glorified.

We remain your Brethren in the fellowship of the gospel.

By order of the Association.

ARIAL KENDRICK, *Moderator.*

JEREMIAH HIGBEE, *Clerk.*