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**Baptists. Connecticut. Danbury Association, 1796.**

**Minutes ... at Stratfield, September ... M, DCC, XCVI.**

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MINUTES

OF THE

DANBURY

BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HOLDEN AT

STRATFIELD,

SEPTEMBER 21<sup>st</sup>, and 22<sup>d</sup>,

M,DCC,XCVI.

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HARTFORD:

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1796.

# MINUTES, &c.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st.

1. **T**HE Association met according to appointment at Strafield ;  
Introductory Sermon delivered by Brother *Wildman*, from  
Matthew xxiv, 13. "*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same  
shall be saved.*"

2. Proceeded to business ; Brother Seth Higby was chosen *Mod-  
erator*, and Brother Hezekiah West, *Clerk*.

3. Letters from the several Churches in our connection, were  
presented, read, and the following list taken.

N. B. In the list, Ministers Names in Capitals ; licenced preach-  
ers in Italics ; those to whose names an \* is affixed were not pres-  
ent ; — dashes denote no settled Minister ; from Churches mark-  
ed thus † we received no letters.

Churches.

Messengers.

†Suffield,  
†Westfield,  
†1st. Danbury,

2d. Danbury,  
Canaan,

1st. Wallingsford,

2d. Wallingsford,

Farmington,

Litchfield,

**JOHN HASTINGS,\***

{ Benjamin Shove,  
Daniel Wildman,

{ Jeduthan Higby,  
Ephraim Hough,

{ Deac. Ebenezer Hawley,  
Ebenezer Norton,  
Deac. Levi Moss,  
Jonathan Woodworth,  
John Todd,

No.	Died.	Excom.	Dism.	Added.
103				
85				
40				
43	1	1	3	
27				
28			5	
23			5	1
29	1			
20	2		2	1

Churches.	Messengers.	Added.	Dism.	Excom.	Died.	No.
Stratfield,	{ STEPHEN ROYCE, Deac. John Staples, Deac. John Edwards, Nathan Bulkley,	3		1	2	124
+Torrington,	{ _____ _____					50
Roxbury,	{ Abijah Fairchild, Joseph Perfa,		5			26
+Warren,	ELIJAH WOOD,*					30
Amena-Town,	DANIEL WILDMAN,	5			1	25
Wolcott,	{ EPHR. THOMSON, Deac. Hezekiah West, Stephen Wilcox,	1		3		31
New-Hartford and West-Britain,	{ _____ _____					73
+New-Milford,	{ Ashbel Hall, Joshua Millard, John Barlow,	1	8			38
Sharon,	{ _____ _____					31
+Simsbury,	RUFUS BABCOCK,					7
Colebrook,	{ John Stephens, BENJ. BALDWIN, Jonathan Smith,	7	1	1		36
ad. Sandersfield,	{ SETH HIGBY, Deac. David Simmons, Benjamin Allis, Ebenezer Waklee,	2	4	1		54
ad. Paulingstown,	{ _____ _____	9	1	2	1	47
+East-Hartford,	JOHN SHERMAN,					47
Newtown,	{ Amos Platt, Manasseh Martin, Robert Chandler,	2			1	22
1st. Paulingstown,	{ _____ _____	2	7	1		52
Total,		34	41	10	9	1098

4. Received a Messenger but no letter from the Shaftsbury Association. Received a letter and minutes from the Stonington Association; by Brother Dickinson; but no letters nor Messengers from the New-York, and Otsego Associations.

5. Voted that a Committee consisting of Brethren, Epaphras Thomson, Daniel Wildman and Deacon Whelpley, be appointed to examine the circular and corresponding letters.

Adjourned till to morrow, 8 o'clock, A. M.

THURSDAY, September 29.

Met according to Adjournment.

Meeting opened by Prayer by Brother Dickinson.

6. Voted to alter the time of this Association; to the first Wednesday in October; on the request of the two Churches in Paulingstown.

7. Brother Higby's circular letter was read and approved, Brother Sherman's corresponding letter to Shaftsbury, Brother West's to Stonington, Brother Waklee's to New-York, and Brother Royces to the Osego Associations; were read and agreed to.

8. Appointed Brother Thomson to superintend printing the minutes.

9. Appointed Brethren, Baldwin, Babcock and Deacon Whipple to the Shaftsbury; Brethren, Royce, Wildman and Bulkley to the New-York; Brethren, Hastings, Smith and Deacon Higby to the Stonington, and Brethren Sherman, Babcock and West, as Messengers to the Osego Associations.

10. Voted, that this Association, be holden the next year, on the first Wednesday in October, at one o'clock P. M. at Wallingford; with the first Baptist Church, at a Meeting-House of the standing order, at Meriden.

11. Appointed Brother Royce to preach the introductory Sermon. In case of failure, Brother Babcock.

12. Voted, to print the corresponding letter with the minutes for the future, after this year.

13. Appointed Brother Baldwin, to prepare the circular letter, and Brother Wildman the corresponding letter for the ensuing year.

14. Voted, to recommend it to the Churches composing this Association, that their Delegates, when met annually, should commune in the Lords Supper; and it is requested that the Churches if they are agreed with it, would manifest it in their letters the ensuing year.

## SUPPLIES for DESTITUTE CHURCHES.

sd. Danbury, { Brother Sherman, 2d. Lord's Day in November.  
Brother Bulkley, 4th. do. in do.

Litchfield, { Brother Wildman, 3d. do. in July.  
Brother Hall, 2d. do. in March.  
Brother Baits, 3d. do. in November.  
Brother Baldwin, 3d. do. in June.  
Brother Royce, last do. in January.  
Brother Babcock, 2d. do. in February.  
Brother Sherman, 3d. do. in October.  
Brother Thomson, 3d. do. in December.  
Brother Thomson, 3d. do. in May.  
Brother Bulkley, last do. in April.

Roxbury,	Brother <i>Baldwin</i> ,	4th.	do.	in June.
2d. Wallingsford,	{	Brother <i>Sherman</i> ,	1st.	do. in May.
		Brother <i>Royce</i> ,	3d.	do. in October.

Concluding Sermon delivered by Brother *Dickinson*; from Matthew xvii. 5. "*And behold a voice out of the cloud which said, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.*"

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# CIRCULAR LETTER,

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DEAR BRETHREN,

**T**HE period has again arrived, in which it has been our practice to address you upon matters of importance.

Several interesting subjects have already been discussed in our addresses to you ; suffer us now to call your attention to the influence of Religion upon Society.

The doctrine of a future retribution, was believed by the ancient heathen to have an important and valuable influence upon society ; and was accordingly propagated from motives of civil policy.—But their ideas of religion were extremely imperfect, and the notions which even their best Philosophers entertained of the state of departed souls must appear ridiculous to the weakest Christian with his Bible in his hand.

The true character of GOD was generally unknown to the Gentiles, until the introduction of Christianity. They entertained ideas of certain beings whom they termed *Gods*, but the characters they ascribed to them were far from being amiable.

“ Gods partial, changeful, passionate unjust ;  
“ Whose attributes were rage, revenge or lust ;

While the scriptures ascribe a most glorious character to the GOD whom Christians worship ;—“ The LORD, the LORD GOD, gracious and merciful—the ALPHA and OMEGA,” &c. He is not limited in his existence or works like the GODS of the nations ; “ but his throne is established of old, and his dominions shall endure forever.”

Moreover, the heathen had unjust ideas of morality. Revenge, valor employed for conquest or other vile purposes, as well as many other things equally void of merit were ranked among their greatest virtues.

The havoc which ALEXANDER and JULIUS CAESAR have made of mankind has procured them the greatest celebrity ; but when their characters are compared with that recommended by the Author of the Christian Religion, there appears a very striking contrast.—“ Blessed are the meek—the poor in spirit—the peace-makers,” &c.

To the doctrines of Grace, the immortality of the Soul and its future State, unfolded in the Gospel with such peculiar lustre and energy, all the fables of antiquity must in point of sublimity give way.

But to give every thing due weight, compare the wisest of heathen maxims with that grand maxim of the Gospel, *whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them*—Mat. vii—12. Make the comparison with care, and judge with candor and you will find the difference. The Gospel scheme is supported by a

series of powerful proofs and undeniable facts ; and we ask what scheme is more divine in its nature, more grand as a system, more pure in its character, or more salutary in its tendency.

Moreover the Christian Religion affects its friends otherwise than as a mere law.—That a reformation sometimes takes place in vicious characters which is imputed to the Christian Religion we presume the boldest infidel will not deny.—And to you it will be wholly unnecessary to offer any arguments in proof of the doctrine of regeneration.

When regeneration takes place, a principle of holiness—of true and universal benevolence takes possession of the Soul. It will readily be conceived that this principle prompts to all that is really noble or excellent in the conduct of mankind.

A love for God, will produce obedience to his requirements. It is a vain objection to Christianity, that its professors do not invariably obey its laws : perfection is not to be looked for in this life. It still remains a glorious proof of the excellence of our religion that in most instances it produces a lasting amelioration of conduct. It is not because they have holiness, but because they have so little of it, that Christians sometimes fall into sin.

The Christian places a firm reliance on the providence of God ; sensible that whatever occurs has the stamp of divine authority, he saucres the hand of his Creator—his hopes are placed on high, where CHRIST our high priest is exalted at the right hand of God.

From this view of the effect of religion upon the hearts and morals of men it requires no great stretch of sagacity to infer a more noble effect upon society, notwithstanding all that has been impudently advanced by deists to the contrary. For it is certain that most of the evils of human life are the immediate effects of sin and would be in a great measure removed, were all or most of men Christians. Moreover a spirit of amity and good will would subsist between individuals, which would at once ennoble and happyfy mankind. It seems also worthy of remark, that the promulgation of Christianity has generally been attended with the advancement of science.

In contemplation of these things dear brethren, we are naturally led to look forward to that period which appears to be fast approaching “ when the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with Songs and everlasting joy upon their heads and Jesus shall reign King of nations as he is King of Saints.” But even the glory of that State will be only a prelude to that HEAVEN ; where the saints shall dwell in the effulgent presence of JEHOVAH, and the sacred flame of love shall catch from heart to heart, and glow with encreasing and eternal fervor

*Signed in behalf of the Association,*

SETH HIGBY, Moderator.

HEZEKIAH WEST, Clerk.