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Baptists . New York . Warwick Association, 1803.

Minutes ... at Brookfield ... May 31,... 1803.

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Minutes
of the

M I N U T E S

OF THE

WARWICK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD AT

BROOKFIELD, ORANGE COUNTY, STATE OF NEW-YORK,

MAY 31, and JUNE 1 and 2, 1803.

TUESDAY, MAY 31, 1803.

AT two o'clock, P. M. Brother JOHN STANFORD, by appointment last year, preached the Introductory Sermon, from John 21, 15, 16, 17. *So when they had dined, Jesus saith unto Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? He said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.* Brother T. Montanye concluded in prayer.

After Sermon, proceeded to business.—Dr. JOHN DODGE was chosen Moderator, JOHN STANFORD, Clerk.

The Letters from the different Churches of this Association were then read.

Ministers names in Capitals. Licensed preachers in Italics. Those marked with an asterisk (*) were not present. From the Churches marked thus †, we had no intelligence. Dashes (—) denote no settled minister.

Churches.	Ministers and Messengers.	Bap- tized.	Recei- ved by letter.	Dis- miss- ed by letter.	Resto- red.	Ex- cluded.	Dece- ased.	Nam- bers.
Warwick,	{ THOMAS STEVENS,	30	2	7	0	0	1	150
	{ James Burt,							
Brook-Town,	{ John M. Foght,	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
	{ REUBEN GARRISON,							
	{ SILAS SOUTHWORTH,							
	{ Humphry Martin,							
	{ Nathaniel Martin,							
	{ John Wilson,	2	0	0	0	0	0	92
	Carried over,	32	2	7	0	0	1	277

<i>Churches,</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Bap- tized.</i>	<i>Recei- ved by letter.</i>	<i>Dis- miss- ed by letter.</i>	<i>Re- stored.</i>	<i>Ex- cluded.</i>	<i>De- ceased.</i>	<i>N. L.</i>
	Brought forward,	32	2	7	0	0	1	27
Newburgh,	{ LUKE DAVIS, O. Causman, Joseph Caukwell, John Canfield,	6	5	3	0	0	0	8
Clinton-Town,	{ JOHN DODGE, John M. Thurston,	3	0	0	0	1	0	2
New Cornwall,†		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stamford,	EBENEZER FERRIS,*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cross River,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bedford,	{ EZRA FOUNTAIN, Sylvanus Reynolds, Eli Seily, Jonathan Mills,	5	1	0	0	0	0	5
Fish-Kill,†		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fayette-Street, New-York,	{ JOHN WILLIAMS, Martin Cowin,	10	14	2	0	4	1	11
Brookfield,	{ JOHN CATON, John Hallick, William Fullerton,	16	1	9	0	0	2	15
Deer Park,	{ BENJAMIN MONTANYE, —————							3
Pleasant-Valley,	{ LEVI HALL, Francis Hanmer, Isaac Newman, Matthew Benedict,	28	3	5	0	2	1	11
Peecks-Kill,	{ JOHN PALMER, Joshua Horton, John Betteley,	15	4	3	1	0	0	7
Middleton,	{ Elihu Cary, Silas Horton,	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Fair-Street, New-York,	{ JOHN STANFORD, John F. Marsh,	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West-Town,	{ THOMAS CASAD, Ebenezer Jayn, John Wentermate, Ebenezer Mead,	15	3	5	0	1	0	9
Tongore,	{ WM. CORNELLEY, Asa Bishop,	0	5	0	0	4	0	5
Yorktown, Croton,	{ ISAAC RHOADS,* Henry Charlick,	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Coram,	{ ————— Isaac Tucker,	3	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total		133	33	36	1	12	6	11

1. Elder William Purdy being present, was invited to a seat with us.
2. The Letter and Minutes of the Rensselaerville Association, were received by their messenger Elder Josiah Baker, and read with pleasure.
3. The Letter and Minutes of the Philadelphian Association were received by their messenger Brother Thomas Montanye and William White, the reading of which contributed largely to our joy.
4. The Circular Letter, prepared for the present year by Brother John Stanford, was read, committed to John Dodge, J. Burt, J. M. Foght, William Fullerton, with the author, as a committee of revision, and to report to-morrow.
5. Adjourned till to-morrow morning eight o'clock.—Closed with prayer by the MODERATOR.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1.

1. Met according to adjournment.—Business opened with prayer by Brother Luke Davis.
2. A church recently raised under the ministry of Brother Luke Davis, having united with the church at Newburgh, are hereby recorded as one church, to be known as *the Church at Newburgh*.
3. Received a letter from the church at North-Castle, formerly in union with this Association, requesting to be realized as such. Unanimously agreed thereto; requesting the said church to give a necessary statement of their standing and numbers next session.
4. In consequence of a letter from the church at Yorktown, John Williams, William White, J. Burt, and H. Martin, were appointed a committee to examine the same.
5. The intention of the General Committee of Correspondence, mentioned in the Philadelphian Minutes, was taken into consideration, and heartily approved. We hereby appoint our Brethren John Stanford and John Williams of New-York, John Caton of Brookfield, John Dodge of Clinton-Town, and Levi Hall of Pleasant-Valley, to be our committee to hold correspondence with them. We cannot but recommend this Institution to the ministers, churches, and associations in America, adding our most fervent prayer for its abundant success.
6. Appointed Brother John Stanford to write to the Philadelphian Association, and our Brethren J. Williams and B. Montanye to be our messengers.
7. Appointed Brother William White to write to the Rensselaerville Association, and Brethren John Caton and Silas Southworth, our messengers.
8. The Committee appointed to examine the letter from Yorktown, reported—Our Brethren Amzezer Ferris and Ezra Fountain are requested to visit that church.
9. On examining the *query*, proposed by the church in Fayette-Street, New-York; from the manner in which it is expressed, and wishing to assume no authority over the independency of our churches, we feel ourselves incompetent to reply.
10. Resolved unanimously, That no minister, *NATIVE* nor *FOREIGNER*, be admitted to office in this Association, until public satisfaction be obtained of his *Christian life* and *sound doctrine*.
11. Received communications from the New-York Association, and unanimously appoint our Brethren Thomas Montanye and James Burt to be our committee invested with full power to act and on behalf of this Association, for the purposes intended.
12. Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Prayer by Brother John Williams.

AFTERNOON.

1. At three o'clock met for public worship. Brother William White preached from Acts 13; and Brother Thomas Montanye from Acts v. 31.—Proceeded to business.

22. The committee appointed to revise the Circular Letter for the present year, reported; the Letter ordered to be printed.

23. ON LICENSING YOUNG MINISTERS. The prevalence of error and infidelity, united with a desire for the spread of the Truth as it is in *Scripture*, dictate a serious recommendation to churches to be attentive to the life and doctrine of those whom they may license to preach the gospel. Such persons, according to the scripture rule, should not only be tried, if they be *teachers*, but that they be not found *novice*, 1 Tim. iii. 6; that is, unskilful in the word of righteousness. No man can teach others what he does not know himself. We therefore urge, that candidates for the ministry be enjoined so to study their bibles, as not only to deliver a few discourses but to stand an examination by the church, of their competency to state and to defend the doctrines of Revelation against the objections of infidelity. As likewise their knowledge of chief and essential doctrines of the gospel, and the nature of its ordinances. Thus, to make themselves workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. We further recommend our churches, in proving such candidates, to avail themselves of the judgment of the churches and ministers in their vicinity; which, we presume, will materially increase their respectability, and promote the cause of Christianity.

24. AN ITINERANT. *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*, Dan. xii. While other societies in America and in Europe are employed in sending missionaries among the Heathen, this Association are ambitious to engage a minister as an Itinerant for the purpose of visiting and preaching in such towns and villages, or other remote places, within the circuit of () miles, in which there may be little or no appearances of religion.—That such minister be appointed by the free choice of this Association.—That he be engaged three months in the year, more or less, according to the ability of this Association, or as the cause of religion may demand.—That such Itinerant be enjoined to keep a journal of his visits, preaching, success, &c. &c. for the inspection and use of this Association.—It is by no means intended, that this Itinerant should intentionally visit or supply any destitute churches, whether in this or in other associations, unless such churches lay in his route to more destitute and barren places: in such cases he shall preserve notes of the state of such churches.—To support this Itinerant, a sermon be preached and a collection be made in every church in this connection, once in the year, and the money forwarded to JAMES BURT, Esq. Warwick, Treasurer, for the purpose herein intended.—That Brethren JOHN STANFORD, JOHN CATON, LEVI HALL, EZRA FOUNTAIN, and SILAS SOUTHWORTH, be, and are hereby appointed a Committee to forward this design for the purpose of operation the next meeting of this Association.—And it is seriously hoped our respective churches will take this subject into serious consideration, and cheerfully grant their aid.

25. Prayer by Brother B. Montanye.—Adjourned till to-morrow morning 8 o'clock.

THURSDAY, JUNE 2.

26. Met according to adjournment.—Prayer by Brother Josiah Baker.

27. Appointed Dr. Dodge to write the Circular Letter for next year; and John Caton write one other, to be in reserve.

28. Agreed, next Association be held at Warwick, the last Tuesday in May. Dr. Dodge preach the Introductory Sermon. In case of failure, Levi Hall.

29. Brother John Stanford to superintend the publication of the Minutes.

30. Supplies for destitute Churches:

Fish-Kill. B. Montanye, 2d Lord's day in July, and 2d in February; Levi Hall, 1st in August; Luke Davis, 3d in April; Henry Charlick, 2d in August, 1st in September, 1st in October, 1st in November.

Cram. Silas Southworth, 2d Lord's day in July.

12th Cornwall. J. Caton, last Lord's day in June; H. Charlick, 2d in September; Luke Davis, 1st in March; B. Montanye, 2d in August.

31. Prayer by Brother S. Southworth.—Adjourned for half an hour.

32. Dr. John Dodge delivered a public discourse from Zeph. iii. 18; and Brother John Caton, minister of the church, made affectionate Addresses to the ministers and messengers, and then concluded the Association with prayer.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

BY JOHN STANFORD, M. A.

THE WARWICK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, convened at BROOKFIELD, ORANGE COUNTY, STATE OF NEW-YORK, MAY 31, and JUNE 1 and 2, 1803.

To the Churches we represent, send Christian salutation.

BELOVED IN THE LORD,

It is with pleasure we retain the custom of addressing you by an annual epistle. We know of no subject more seasonable for your present attention than to remind you of the CAUSE and MEANS of promoting our blessed religion.

By religion, as it relates to individuals, we mean, the restoration of the soul, through the atonement of Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost, to the communion of God, obedience to his will, and the possession of hope for everlasting life. Religion, as applied to Society, is a public union of persons, in subjection to Christ, the possession of his truth, and attendance upon his worship; the practice of holy duties, and a mutual fellowship in Christian love. Both these, as relating to individuals and to the church, although the principle of grace which produces them, is eternally permanent, yet in its exercise, through the depravity of man, the force of temptation, and the evil of the world, are subject to many variations. This is as evident from the experience of the Christian, and the history of the church, as it is from the word of God. Whatever the present state of public religion may be, we venture to affirm, every Christian will ardently desire, that out of Zion God may shine with increasing glory, and that he would send such abundant prosperity, that multitudes may be converted to Christ, and his kingdom extend from pole to pole! Presuming, dear Brethren, this to be your fervent prayer, we cheerfully proceed to remind you, that—

The Efficient Cause of religion, and its Prosperity, is God. *It is God that giveth the increase.* . . . It is, however, of the highest importance that we add,—not simply as the God of Nature, but as the God of Grace, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who is revealed through the scriptures, in the new relation of FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, for the inexpressibly glorious purpose of saving lost sinners. You, dear Brethren, are not strangers to this God; into those adorable names you have been baptized; and, into the sublime belief of whom we pray you may be

abundantly established.—The FATHER is worthy of our adoration and praise for his elect love, and blessing us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. i.—The SON is worthy to receive honour, blessing, power, and glory, for ever, having redeemed us to God by his blood; made our eternal interest secure; and, possessing a fulness of grace, conform us to his image—The ETERNAL SPIRIT no less demands our praise, as is the AGENT of communication from Christ to sinners, for the grand purpose of their regeneration; their believing union with the Redeemer in his person, righteousness, atonement, and grace, directing them in the practical knowledge of truth; and sealing them heirs of immortality and glory. These are the operations of our gracious covenant God, and who is the first cause, and the completion of that blessed religion we hope you possess. With confidence we encourage you, that the same God who hath begun the good work in you, will carry it on unto perfection. Be assured, the natural world is not more indebted to sun, air, rain, and dew, for the growth of trees, plants, flowers, than your souls, and the church of God, are to Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, and the breathing of the blessed Spirit, for life, comfort, peace, and prosperity, in the religion of grace. Who of us then but with David should say, “Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee” And unite with the Spouse, “Awake, O north wind, and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.” It is owing to this heavenly communication, that any increase in the experience of the love of God. This is the reason why those who are planted in the house of the Lord, flourish in the courts of our God, and bear fruit even to old age. And this is the sole cause of the success of the gospel in the conversion of sinners, and the increase of Zion. O then, let us rest in the faith, and in the work of our great Emmanuel! Jesus as HEAD, will necessarily complete and supply the members of his spiritual body the church.—And, as the heavenly BRIDEGROOM, his heart has determined, that his grace shall accomplish the prosperity and glory of his Bride! Come then, thou blessed Saviour; come to our souls; come down to thy church; as rain upon the mown grass, as show that water the earth! Now Lord, we beseech thee, send prosperity!

We will now remind you of some of those MEANS which God blesses for the prosperity of religion.

1. The first we name is the preaching of the pure unadulterated gospel of Christ, which *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*. Numbers may, by preaching, be drawn to a party, and make a very popular appearance of religious prosperity; but, be assured, nothing short of *the Truth as it is in Christ*, which debases the sinner and exalts the Saviour, can ever be the means of converting one soul to Christ, or feed those lambs and sheep who are already brought to him. *Go ye out*, said Jesus to his ministers, *into all the world; preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: he that believeth not, shall be damned. And lo, I am with you alway*. The gospel is the mean; the minister the instrument; and Christ by his Spirit the sovereign Agent in the great work of faith and conversion. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*. Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase. Because the hand of the Lord was upon the apostles, a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. O Brethren, pray the Lord to be upon his ministers, and accompany his word with power, that it may have free course, run, and be glorified—That the Lord of the harvest may hold your ministers as stars in his right hand, anoint their shields, and make the gospel subservient to the conversion of thousands!

2. Holding fast the profession of your faith without wavering, as individuals and as churches, in your attachment to the truth, and to the ordinances of the gospel as they were delivered by Christ, are essential to the honour and prosperity of religion. Nothing is more engaging, more lovely, than a steady, humble uniform profession of the gospel; and nothing is more odious in itself, discouraging to tender minds, and confirming the bands of infidelity, than a loose, un-

conversation by those who boast of Christianity. Indolence and lukewarmness in churches are serious corruptions. Such prove the justness of the wise man's observation, that *By much slothfulness the building is decayed, and through the idleness of the hands, the house droopeth through.* Eccl. x. 18. From an inattention and perversion of the ordinance of Christ, many were weak and sickly among the church at Corinth; and because the church at Ephesus had left their first love, Jesus threatened to remove their candlestick out of his place, except they repented. O Brethren! remember your Saviour hath said, If ye love me, keep my commandments. We live in an age wherein errors abound: multitudes profess the religion of Jesus, but are to be feared who are concerned to walk in holy uniformity to the precepts of the gospel. We beseech you, therefore, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Live in peace; cherish hardness of heart: love as brethren; keep your garments unspotted by the flesh; strive to the faith of the gospel; and the God of love and peace shall make your way prosperous.

3. We cannot but on this occasion say, that unity and love amongst the ministers of Christ, materially promote the prosperity of religion. Diversities of talents are distributed by our Lord necessary to carry on the work of building the gospel temple; and, amidst such diversity, every humble minister will stand in the station in which he is placed; not envying those whose talents may be greater; nor looking down with indifference upon those who have less. The more grace sanctifies gifts, the more humble and useful will be the possessor. Few things are more oppressive to religion than dissensions, animosities, evil speaking, and persecutions among ministers. May the Lord solemnize and warm the hearts of his servants to seek the prosperity of Zion; duly to regard the worth of souls, and to be united hand and heart for the honour of Jesus! Wherever this animating spirit prevails among an association of ministers, they may triumphantly exclaim, with the builders of the ancient temple, *The God of heaven, he will prosper us, therefore we his servants will arise and build. . . .* We pray that mutual love, holiness, tenderness, and zeal may more abundantly increase, and that your pastors and teachers may be found faithful and successful in the work of the Lord, until death shall translate them to immortality and glory.

4. Liberality is a necessary mean for promoting the prosperity of Zion. The state of religion in the world requires it; and God loveth a cheerful giver. Although we do not consider that the prosperity of a church consists either in the magnificence of a meeting-house, or the wealth of its members: yet liberality is necessary for the erection and preservation of a building for worship. The wants of the necessitous poor have a demand upon the affluent: for if any man neglect his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? But, the support of your ministers is of serious importance; not as a testimonial on humanity, nor as an act of your charity, but as dictated by gospel obligation. *The Lord hath ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.* 1 Cor. ix. 14. Whether a minister be poor, or whether he be rich, this obligation is binding upon you to be liberal to those who labour among you in the service of Jesus. Who but a man of the most covetous and contracted disposition would consider a minister under obligation to leave the duties of his family, to spend his time, consume his constitution, and employ his talents, for his benefit, for nothing? Would such a man expect a teacher for his children, or a physician for his family, without compensation? Why then should the servant of Jesus meet with neglect? Although there may be preaching in the world, which cannot promote the prosperity of religion, and not worth one cent an annum, yet, where you receive and approve the pure truth of the gospel by a man as your pastor, you are bound by every moral and gospel obligation to support him according to your ability. Can we believe the sincerity of him who prays for the prosperity of the gospel, the conversion of sinners, and the welfare of Zion, and yet intentionally withholds his aid to his minister at home, or to a missionary abroad? We beseech you, therefore, dear Brethren, to con-

fort and to encourage your ministers, that they may have boldness in their work, and be stimulated to perform the duties of their station. Cultivate compassion to the widow and the distressed; and, while you live in ceiled houses, let not your buildings for worship decay, or be deficient in convenience and cleanliness through your willing neglect. We commend David as an example to your liberality in the cause of religion, and wish that with him you may say, "I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunring: If I do not remember thee, my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Psalm cxxxvii. 5, 6.

5. Private and social Prayer are necessary means for the prosperity of religion. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.* Say, dear Brethren, in your hearts and your constant prayers. *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.* It is with confidence we assure you, God, who has decreed the prosperity of Zion, has made prayer a necessary mean for the accomplishment of the end. For all these things will I be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them, saith the Lord. If you have a lively sense of the love of God to your own souls, you will assuredly plead, that God's way may be known upon earth, and his saving health among all nations; and that converts may multiply and abound as morning dew. On the absence of your minister, or when wholly destitute of a teacher, fail not to assemble together for prayer, praise, reading the scripture, or a sound discourse. The dear Brethren, by the bowels of mercies;—by the worth of souls;—by the honour of God;—the bitter sufferings and death of our dear Saviour,—and by the interceding groans of the Holy Ghost;—we intreat your most solemn and ardent prayers, that a time of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and the brightness of his glory may rest upon us!

6. The limits of our paper will allow us only to add, that lively expressions of gratitude and praise are so charming in themselves, and so pleasing to God, they fail not to contribute to the pleasures of religion. We too often, without occasion, hang our harps upon the willows. The people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise, saith the Lord. In the worst of times there is cause for thanksgiving; and a lively Christian may often sing his cares away! Our past experience,—the appearance of religion in America, Europe, Asia, and Africa,—the promises of God for the perfection of Zion; united with the preciousness of Christ and a hope of endless joy:—these are among the precious subjects which form the animating songs of the righteous. Therefore let prayer and praise be in constant unison. It will create the most animating melody in the soul, stimulate those who are drowsy, and actually make the temple of grace to assimilate the temple of glory.

Now, dear Brethren, having directed you to God in Christ as the grand cause of the prosperity of religion, and named some of the many means which God blesses to accomplish the end, we conclude with commending you to God. We have drawn the outlines of Zion's prosperity, and now beg the blessing itself may be granted to you from above, that you may be to him an honour and a praise in the earth.

JOHN DODGE, Moderator.

JOHN STANFORD, Clerk.