

MINUTES

OF THE

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COLUMBIA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

Maintaining inviolably, "The unity of God; the existence of three equal persons in the Godhead; the just condemnation and total depravity of all mankind by the fall of our first parents; eternal, personal, and unconditional election; the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the necessity of his atonement, and its special relation to the sins of the elect only; justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone; effectual calling; perseverance of the saints; believers' baptism by immersion only; the Lord's Supper a privilege peculiar to baptized believers, regularly admitted to church fellowship; the resurrection of the body, and general judgment; the final happiness of the saints, and misery of the wicked, alike interminable; the obligation of every intelligent creature to love God supremely, to believe what God says, and practise what God commands; and the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the complete and infallible rule of faith and practice;"

HELD BY APPOINTMENT,

At Rock Hill, Stafford County, Virginia,
August 21st, 22d, and 23d,

1823.

						70	1812	
	1					47	1812	
3	1	1				89	1818	
6	1	3		2	2	77	1819	
2	1					43	1822	
				1	29	17	19	1673

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1823.

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST
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Wake Forest, North Carolina

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1822.

1. At 11 o'clock, A. M. brother Robert Latham preached the introductory sermon, from Galatians vi. 14. "*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*"

2. After preaching, the business of the Association was opened with singing, and prayer by brother Brown; after which letters from the churches were read, and the messengers' names enrolled.

CHURCHES AND MESSENGERS.	MINISTERS.	Days of preaching.	Baptized.	Received by letter		Dismissed.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total number.	When constituted	
				Restored.							
Chappawamsick	{ Jos. R. Lynn, Benj. Cole.	WM JAMES.	4th	4	1	4	2	2	184	1767	
Little River	{ R. LATHAM, James Hixon.*	R. LATHAM.	1st	1	2		2		60	1769	
New Brenttown	{ John Fox, David Jameson.	C. GEORGE.	2d	4	1	2			109	1773	
Occoquan	{ Geo. Selectman, George Carney.	JAS. REID.	3d	6	1	2	3	4	117	1778	
Hartwood	{ George Curtis, John Christie.	C. GEORGE.	4th	7		2	1		50	1786	
Long Branch	{ George Love, J. C. Herndon.	R. LATHAM.	4th	3	2		1	1	66	1787	
Backlick	{ JAMES REID, Saul Martin.	JAS. REID.	2d	6		3	5	1	4	236	1791
Fryingpan	{ J. JOHNSON, Nath. Barker.	J. JOHNSON.	3d	5	1	2		2	66	1792	
Nanjemoy	D. Kennedy.								58	1793	
1st Washington	{ O. B. BROWN.	O. B. BROWN.	ev'y	4	5	4	1	2	138	1802	
Alexandria	{ JOHN BRYCE, D. Cawood.	JOHN BRYCE.	ev'y	7	10	8	3	2	215	1803	
Bethlehem	{ F. M. Lewis, John H. Dye.	R. LATHAM.	2d	1		1	1		48	1812	
Grove	{ T. STRING-FELLOW, Elias Fant,	T. STRING-FELLOW.	2d			1			70	1812	
Rock Hill	{ Wm. Starke, Robert Beatty.	T. STRING-FELLOW.	3d	3	1				47	1812	
Shiloh-Fredericksbg.	{ W. JAMES, C. GEORGE.	WM. JAMES.	ev'y	3	1	1			89	1818	
Mount Pleasant	{ Noah Martin, Wm. Kidwell.	JAS. REID.	4th	6	1	3	2	2	77	1819	
Elk Run	{ E. Hansbrough, Wm. Bowers.*	T. STRING-FELLOW.	4th	2	1				43	1822	
			62	27	11	29	17	19	1673		

N. B. Ministers' names are in capitals. Those marked * were not present.
A — denotes no pastor.

3. Brother Thornton Stringfellow was chosen Moderator.
 4. Received communications from the following Associations :

Ketocton; letter and messenger, brother George H. Reynolds.

Dover; messenger, brother Semple.*

Shiloh; minutes and messenger, brother Garnett.

Baltimore; letter and messengers, Thomas Barton* and William Sedwick.*

5. Ministering brethren, Caswell, Patterson, Stow, Wyer, Ballard, and Bernard, and also brother Thomas Buck, former Clerk of the Ketocton Association, being present, were invited to take seats with us.

6. *Resolved*, That the Association now proceed to elect, by private poll, the preachers to occupy the stand to-morrow.

7. Pursuant to the foregoing resolution, brethren Bryce, James, Reynolds, and Garnett, were elected.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock. Prayer by brother George.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by brother Bryce.

8. *Resolved*, That the Association will, before the close of the present session, appoint ministering brethren to preach at this place on Lord's-day next.

9. Brother William Hunton, of Broad Run church, being present, and understanding that he was desirous to make some communication to the Association, he was cordially invited to a seat with us.

10. Brother Hunton stated, that brother S. H. Cone, late Treasurer of this Association, having removed to New York, had left his accounts with him, requesting him to settle the same, and pay over the balance: whereupon, brethren Brown and Love were appointed a committee to settle the late treasurer's accounts.

11. The committee appointed to settle the late treasurer's accounts, made report—That a balance of \$67 90 was found due to the Association, and that brother Hunton had paid the same over to them. Which report was approved.

12. Brother Enoch Reynolds, of Washington City, was elected Treasurer.

13. The committee who received the money remaining in the treasury, were directed to pay the same, together with what may be contributed at the present session, to the Treasurer.

14. The circular letter, written by brother Latham, was

* Not present.

read, and referred to a committee, consisting of brethren Brown, Love, and Bryce, with the author; to report to-morrow morning.

15. The corresponding letter, written by brother George, was read, and referred to a committee, consisting of brethren Stringfellow, Johnson, and Fox, with the author; to report to-morrow morning.

16. A committee, consisting of brethren Latham and Bryce, was appointed to examine the letters from the churches composing this Association, and report what subjects contained in said letters are necessary to be acted on.

17. Brethren Reid, George, and Love, were appointed a committee to arrange the visitation meetings.

18. Brother James was appointed to preach the next introductory sermon; and, in case of failure, brother Johnson.

19. Brother Bryce was appointed to write the circular letter for next year; and, in case of failure, brother Johnson.

20. Brother Johnson was appointed to write the corresponding letter for next year; and, in case of failure, brother Reid.

21. The committee appointed to examine the letters from the churches composing this Association, reports—1st. That the Chapawamsick church inquires, What method can be devised more effectually to guard against impostors? Answer: It does not appear to this Association that any more effectual measures are practicable, than those already recommended, viz.: *that satisfactory credentials be required by the churches, of all strangers coming under the character of Baptist preachers.*

2d. The church at Backlick inquires, If it would not be advisable for the Association to recommend to the churches a day of prayer and humiliation? Answer: The Association recommends to the churches to set apart the Saturday before the fifth Lord's day in November, for prayer and humiliation, for the outpouring of the Divine Spirit upon our churches. And, moreover, it is recommended to them, frequently to set apart such other days, to be observed for the same purpose, as to them may seem suitable and proper.

3d. The church at Alexandria proposes so to alter the constitution, as that each church may send three messengers. Answered in the negative.

4th. The church at Mount Pleasant inquires, If the Association would not do well to recommend to the churches a religious observance of the 4th of July? Whereupon,

Resolved, That we recommend to the churches severally, composing this Association, to set apart the 4th day of July, the birth-day of American Independence, as a day of solemn

thanksgiving to God, for the national blessings which he has bestowed upon us.

22. *Resolved, unanimously*, That the next Association be held at the Baptist meeting house in Alexandria, to commence on the Thursday preceding the fourth Lord's-day in August, 1824, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

Adjourned for 20 minutes. Prayer by brother Johnson.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by brother Bryce.

23. The following visitation meetings were appointed, pursuant to the report of the committee, viz.

1st. At Grove, the fifth Lord's-day in the present month, and Saturday preceding; brethren James and Latham to attend.

2d. At Nanjemoy, on the fifth Lord's-day in November, and Saturday preceding; brethren Brown and Bryce to attend.

3d. At the same place, on the fifth Lord's-day in May, and Saturday preceding; brethren Stringfellow and George to attend.

4th. At Hartwood, the fifth Lord's-day in November, and Saturday preceding; brethren Latham and Reid to attend.

5th. At Back Lick, on the fifth Lord's-day in February, and Saturday preceding; brethren Bryce and Johnson to attend.

6th. At Long Branch, on the fifth Lord's-day in May, and Saturday preceding; brethren Johnson and James to attend.

7th. At Occoquan, on the fifth Lord's-day in May, and Saturday preceding; brethren Latham and Patterson to attend.

8th. At Bethlehem, on the fifth Lord's-day in November, and Saturday preceding; brethren Stringfellow and Johnson to attend.

9th. At Fryingpan, on the third Lord's-day in June, and Saturday preceding; brethren Brown and Bryce to attend.

24. Brethren Bryce, Johnson, James, and Reid, were appointed messengers to attend the General Association of Baptists in Virginia, to be held at Lynchburg, on the first Saturday in June, and Lord's-day following.

25. Brethren Brown and Johnson were appointed a committee to examine the minutes of corresponding associations.

26. The committee appointed for that purpose, reported—that they had examined the minutes of corresponding asso-

ciations, and found nothing which required the special notice of this Association.

27. The following messengers were appointed to corresponding associations, viz.

Ketocton; to be held on the Thursday before the third Lord's-day in August, at Bethel meeting house, Frederick county, brethren Brown, Bryce, and Latham.

Dover; to be held at Nuckle's meeting house, Goochland county, on the second Saturday in October, brethren Bryce and James.

Shiloh; to be held on the Friday preceding the first Lord's-day in September, at Fiery Run, Fauquier county, brethren Stringfellow, Latham, and Reid.

Goshen; to be held at Mount Hermon, in Spotsylvania county, on the first Saturday in October, brethren Latham and George.

Baltimore; to be held in Baltimore, the Thursday preceding the third Lord's-day in May, brethren Brown, Bryce and Johnson.

28. Brethren Brown and Bryce were appointed to superintend the printing and distribution of the Minutes; and it is ordered that 1000 copies be printed.

29. Brethren Johnson, Brown, and Garnett, were appointed to preach at the stand to-morrow.

30. Brethren Wyer, Stow, and Ballard, were appointed to preach at the stand on Lord's-day.

31. The following sums were contributed by the churches to the Association fund, viz. Chappawamsick \$3, Little River \$2, New Brent-town \$2, Occoquan \$2, Hartwood \$1 25, Long Branch \$3, Back Lick \$2 34, Fryingpan \$3, Nanjemoy \$3, 1st Washington \$5, Alexandria \$5, Bethlehem \$2 75, Grove \$3, Rock Hill \$2, Shiloh \$3, Mount Pleasant \$3, Elk Run \$3; amounting to \$48 34.

32. Brother Stringfellow, our agent for corresponding with the Board of Foreign Missions, laid before the Association the last Annual Report of said Board, and their general Circular Letter; which letter was read.

33. The resolution entered into at the last Association, for having no appointment for preaching on Lord's-day, at the place of the meeting of the Association, was rescinded; whereupon it was

34. *Resolved*, That the Association will hereafter continue its session till the close of the exercises on Lord's-day.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock. Prayer by brother James.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by brother Johnson.

35. Brother Brown, from the committee to whom the circular letter was referred, reported the same, with some amendments, which was adopted.

36. Brother Stringfellow, from the committee to whom the corresponding letter was referred, reported the same with some amendments; which letter was adopted.

37. *Resolved, unanimously*, That the thanks of this Association be presented to the brethren and friends in this vicinity, for the hospitable entertainment which we have received, and especially for the measures adopted by them to prevent molestation, and preserve good order during our meeting.

38. *Resolved*, That hereafter the necessary expenses of the messengers appointed to visit our sister Associations, or any special business on which brethren may be sent by this Association, be defrayed out of the funds, on being reported and approved by the Association.

Having finished the business, the session was closed with prayer by brother Bryce.

THORNTON STRINGFELLOW, *Moderator*.

JOHN FOX, *Clerk*.

PUBLIC WORSHIP AT THE STAND.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21.

Brother Alexis Caswell preached from John xv. 24.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22.

Brother Bryce preached from 1 Timothy i. 15.

Brother Raynolds do. John i. 1.

Brother James do. Colossians iii. 3, 4.

Concluding address by brother Garnett.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23.

Brother Garnett preached from Matthew xvi. 18.

Brother Brown do. Romans viii. 28.

Brother Johnson do. Isaiah lviii. 1.

Closed with an address and prayer by brother Bryce.

LORD'S-DAY, AUGUST 24.

Brother Stow preached from Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.

Brother Ballard do. 2 Corinthians v. 10.

Brother Wyer do. Romans i. 16.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Columbia Baptist Association, assembled at Rock Hill, Stafford, Va. August 21, 22, and 23, 1823; to the several churches composing the same, greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

VERY soon after the existence of Baptists on this continent, it was thought adviseable by them, for the several churches in different parts of our country to form themselves into what we call Associations, for the purpose of gaining information concerning the state of God's Zion, and, when solicited, to give advice; to the end that good understanding should be maintained, and fellowship preserved. These are desirable objects, closely connected with such a course of conduct as is calculated to *provoke to love and good works*. It has been the practice of Associations to send out with their minutes an address, in the form of a letter, to the several churches in their connexion. Various subjects have been attended to at different times. They have severally exercised their best abilities, hoping that impressions would be made on the minds of brethren, tending to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. It is somewhat difficult at the present day, to introduce a subject entirely new; yet we are unwilling to relinquish a practice which may still be useful.

On the present occasion, suffer us to call your attention to the exhortation, "*Neglect not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.*" That it is the duty of Christians to meet together, and unite with each other in the worship of God, is so evident we will not attempt a proof of it; but there are duties connected with this, which may not have been thought of by brethren in general, in that relative sense in which they stand, according to the order of things. A church of Jesus Christ may be compared to a

family, in which should exist a particular freedom and intimacy, for the preservation of good order, and the interest of each member. For the greater convenience, and better opportunity of meeting together, the Baptists have, by Divine direction, formed themselves into little organized bodies, called churches; each of which constitutes an independent community, free from the control of all others, and accountable to Jesus Christ alone for her conduct. On this principle, which should never be abandoned in relation to the independence of each body, our churches have mutually agreed to maintain a friendly intercourse and Christian fellowship with each other, through the medium of Associations.

After these few remarks, suffer us to attend more immediately to the subject under consideration. Perhaps there is not a church in our connexion that has not a place where it meets to worship. But may not many churches be too negligent in this duty? And are not many members of churches unworthy of the Christian name, because of their almost entire neglect of it? Many attempts have been made to correct this error, and preserve that good order in the churches which is so desirable. But notwithstanding the exertions of brethren on this subject, connected with the many mercies we have enjoyed, we have reason to put up a lamentation, and say, *our leanness, our leanness!* Causes and their effects are inseparable. It is impossible that good can attend a neglect of duty; and it is equally impossible that evil should result from walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. Why should not churches assemble together every first day of the week? There certainly can be no good reason assigned why they should not do so. If a blessing attended our meeting last first day, and we were happy in the society of each other while engaged in the worship of God, why not let it be known by our meeting next first day? But a difficulty exists here with many, which is almost insurmountable. The opportunity of *hearing preaching from home*, is preferable with many, to meeting *at home, where we shall have no preaching*. It is certainly the privilege of churches to consult their own interest, and so make their an

pointments, having an eye to the direction of the Lord; and when the time comes for the church to assemble together, it must be the duty of every member to be present, that has not a good excuse for not being there. Suffer us, brethren, to give our opinion with regard to excuses offered to justify absence; such as going on a visit in the neighbourhood, or receiving visits from neighbours; and a variety of others, not less frivolous. These are excuses for absence which should never be countenanced by a church.

The advantages which must result from brethren meeting together and engaging in the worship of God, will prove to be of the highest consideration. It will be acknowledged, that fellowship enjoyed by the members of churches, is a singular happiness: and what is better calculated to secure this desirable object, than for brethren to prove to each other that they have real satisfaction in meeting often, for the exercise of their several gifts, in prayer, singing, exhortation, and conversation about what they hope God has done for their souls? By this means they will contract an intimacy and freedom with each other, which will be attended with a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This will inspire them with a greater desire to search the scriptures, and produce in them thoughtfulness on divine subjects. If these things should accompany brethren paying respect to the exhortation, ought they to ask for a stronger inducement? But there are many other advantages which would attend a compliance with this duty. The example would have a happy influence on many Christians. They would be more heavenly minded, more humble, and less devoted to the cares and fashions of this world. If there should be any gifts in the churches, promising peculiar usefulness, they will, by this means, be discovered. And is it not truly desirable that a church should possess gifts, that shall be exercised in the support of the Redeemer's cause?

Dear brethren, what is comparable to brethren dwelling together in unity! The oil upon Aaron's head, which ran down his beard, even to the skirts of his garment, though shedding a rich perfume, which was grateful to the sense,

was not equal to the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace. This is truly gratifying to the souls of God's people; and while they exercise sincerity in approving the things which are excellent, they ardently desire to pursue that course which will be profitable to Zion, and show forth the praise of God in the world. Could a reformation be effected, so as to make us more like this picture, we should then be much more like the primitive Christians than we are at present. In accomplishing so desirable an object, we must be in spirit more like our brethren who took the kingdom by violence. The world must be resisted, the flesh must be resisted, and the devil must be resisted; for they individually, and unitedly, are foes to the religion of our dear Redeemer; consequently they will make attempts to injure the possessors of it. And though the children of God cannot be destroyed by their enemies, or dispossessed of their eternal inheritance, yet they may suffer loss while in this enemy's land, should they turn out of the way marked out for them by the Captain of their salvation, and fail to have on, at all times, the whole armour of God; and especially to have ready at hand the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and which is able, when skilfully used, to put to flight all our foes. If an acquaintance with the scriptures is so necessary to our enjoyment of the society of our brethren, and the gaining of the victory over our enemies,—the pursuing of a course which will inspire us with a wish to be thus acquainted with the Bible, must include in it the assembling of ourselves together, that we may attend to the things pertaining to our Redeemer's kingdom.

Dear brethren, is there not reason to mourn on account of that barrenness of soul which is so perceivable amongst us? Have we not *forsaken*, in a degree, *the fountain of living waters*, and have we not drunk deep in the spirit of the world? which is similar to that of *hewing to ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which will hold no water*. Dear brethren, does not the present state of things call for a degree of energy of soul, which is not common amongst us? If we possess a desire that a change should take place for good, let us return

to the fountain of living waters, and inquire for the good old way; and we shall be enabled to walk therein. Then shall we enjoy the light of His countenance, who is King in Zion, and His name shall be glorified in the assemblies of his saints on earth.

T. STRINGFELLOW, *Moderator.*

JOHN FOX, *Clerk.*

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Columbia Baptist Association, convened in Rock Hill Meeting-house, August 21, 22, and 23, 1823, to the sister Associations with whom we correspond.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

It has pleased the Almighty Sovereign of the Universe to permit us again to assemble together as an associated body. We met in love, and we part in peace; and shall carry with us, we trust, the sweet savour of the loving kindness of our Heavenly Father. We lament that it is not our privilege in this communication, to give an account of extensive revivals of religion in any of the churches composing our Association. To most of them, however, there have been additions, and the prospect for future ingatherings in many of our congregations is encouraging; and we rejoice to learn from the churches generally, that there exist amongst them much harmony and brotherly love, and their letters speak of their ardent desire for the coming of the kingdom of God. "*When Zion travails she brings forth children;*" but, brethren, when we look around us, we have reason to fear and believe that many are running whom God has not sent, saying Peace, peace, when Jehovah has not said peace. They labour to bring some of the most distinct features of the gospel into ridicule and contempt; for this purpose, dismembered portions of the word of God are brought up, whilst their connexion is kept out of view, or artfully attempted to be explained away; and thereby many are more blinded and de-

coyed into the most awful delusion. The word of God is its own witness. Would it not be well, not only to recommend the reading of the scriptures, but to search them diligently? We believe that all lovers of the Lord Jesus delight to read, or hear read, the book of God; but is not a diligent searching of the scriptures too much neglected? The Lord Jesus said, "*Search the Scriptures.*" We think, in reference to religious subjects, that the opinions of men are too much sought after. The Bible surely is the standard of truth; and it is written, "*Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and that maketh flesh his arm:*" and again, "*If we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*" We are animated, however, brethren, with the assurance which the scriptures give, that *Zion's watchmen shall see eye to eye, together shall they lift up the voice, and together shall they sing.* We wish to rejoice with you in viewing the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom: We hail, with rapture, the dawn of that bright day, in which the *heathen shall become his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession; when his kingdom shall come with power and glory, and the whole world be filled with the knowledge of his glory.* "*Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*" Amen. We have had the happiness to receive messengers from a few of our sister Associations, with tokens of Christian love and fellowship; and we hope that, in our interview, nothing has transpired which they will have occasion to regret, or we to deplore. As servants of the Lord Jesus, we have received, and as such we love them. Our next Association will be held at Alexandria, on the Thursday preceding the fourth Lord's-day in August, 1824, where we most cordially and affectionately invite you to meet us, both by letter and messengers.

T. STRINGFELLOW, *Moderator.*

JOHN FOX, *Clerk.*



