

M I N U T E S

OF THE

Delaware Baptist-Association,

HELD AT THE MEETING HOUSE AT DUCK-CREEK,
ALIAS BRINSON, ON JUNE 6, 7, and 8, 1801.

1. At 11 o'clock, A. M. Brother Gideon Ferrell delivered the introductory sermon, from Col. i. 19. *For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.*

2. Brother *Joseph Flood* was chosen *Moderator*, & Brother *John Boggs, jun.* Clerk.

3. Letters from five churches were read, and the ministers and messengers names enrolled.

N. B. Ministers names in CAPITALS—licenced preachers in *Italics*. Dashes denote no settled pastor. Those to whose names an * is affixed were not present.

CHURCHES.	Ministers and Messengers.	Bap.	Rec.	Dis.	Exc.	Dec.	Num.
<i>Welch-Tract,</i>	GIDEON FERRELL, Ephraim Stoops*, John Bennet*.	10			1	6	124
<i>Cow-Marsh,</i> alias <i>Mount-Moriab,</i>	Samuel Broadaway, John Keys, Job Meredith.	2					27
<i>Duck-Creek,</i> alias <i>Brinson,</i>	JAMES JONES, Andrew Lockhart, Samuel Dicus, John Coarfe.	2	7	5		1	62
<i>Wilmington,</i>	JOSEPH FLOOD, <i>John Boggs, jun.</i> Thomas Brooks*.	16	4	1			47
<i>Mispillion,</i>	Samuel Meredith*, Vincent Bewick, Robert Minors, Peter King.	15		1		1	33
							Total 297

4. The Circular Letter, by Brother John Boggs, jun. was read : Brethren Joseph Flood and Gideon Ferrell, in conjunction with the author, appointed a committee to examine it, and report thereon.

5. A corresponding letter from the Philadelphia Association, presented by Brother Ferrell was read.

6. Brother James Jones appointed to write to the Philadelphia Association ; and Brethren Joseph Flood and John Boggs, jun. messengers.

7. Brother John Boggs, jun. appointed to write to the Salisbury Association, and Brethren James Jones, Gideon Ferrell, Vincent Besswick, Robert Minors, Job Meredith, and Samuel Broadaway, messengers.

8. Brethren Joseph Flood and John Boggs, jun. appointed to draft an address to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States of America, to lay before the Association on Monday morning.

9. Brother John James, jun. appointed Treasurer for this Association.

10. Motioned, seconded, and carried, that the Constitution of this Association be printed with the minutes.

11. The next Association to be held at Cow-Marsh, alias Mount-Moriah, on the Saturday preceding the first Lord's day in June, 1802.

12. Brother James Jones to write the Circular Letter for next year ; and Brother Joseph Flood to preach the introductory sermon.

13. Adjourned business until Monday morning, half after 8 o'clock.

14. Prayer by the Moderator.

LORD'S DAY MORNING, June 7th.

Met for divine service at 10 o'clock.

Sermon by Brother Boggs, jun. from Luke xii. 32.
Fear not, little flock ; For it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

In continuation, Brother Flood preached from Heb. *iv. 9. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

Intermission fifteen minutes.

Brother Ferrell preached from Luke i. 79. *To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

MONDAY MORNING, June 9th.

1. Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Brother Broadway.

2. The Circular Letter was approved and presented by the committee.

3. The corresponding letters to the Philadelphia and Salisbury Associations were read and approved.

4. The address to the President, presented by the committee appointed to prepare it, was read and approved.

5. The ministers of this Association agree to attend a yearly meeting at Mispillion, on Wednesday, the 14th of October.

6. The clerk to superintend the printing and distributing of the minutes.

10 o'clock, A. M. Brother Boggs, jun. preached from Matt. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Brother Ferrell in continuation, preached from Heb. x. 23. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.*

Brother Flood concluded with recapitulation, exhortation, and prayer.



Circular Letter.

*The ministers and messengers of the Delaware Association, to the churches they represent, send
Christian salutation.*

Beloved Brethren,

HAVING once more been permitted to meet in Association to consult the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, and our mutual comfort and edification, we most affectionately address you.

We rejoice to find from your letters, that additions have been made to all our churches, and that they continue to walk in the fellowship of the Gospel, holding the faith once delivered to the saints, and keeping the ordinances in their primitive purity.

Anxious to promote your present and eternal felicity, and believing that much of the comfort of religion depends upon the exercise of grace in the heart, and the cultivation of holy and virtuous dispositions of soul—Permit us at this time, to call your attention to the consideration of that Christian charity, which is so frequently inculcated in scripture, and which we conceive to be essentially necessary to the right performance of the duties of religion. Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.—By charity we understand that principle of divine grace in the soul, which inclines all our words and actions to the glory of God, and the welfare and happiness of men. We will endeavour to investigate it in its different operations—and first as it influences our conduct towards God: It makes us jealous of his honour, zealous for the glory of his name in the world, and particularly careful to render a willing and ready obedience to his commandments, from sentiments of the most unfeigned love and reverence; it divests the mind of all selfish and interested views in the discharge of religious duties; the language of the heart that has felt the influence of this heavenly and happy disposition, is some-

thing similar to that of the Psalmist, "O Lord how love I thy law! teach me thy way, O Lord: I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify thy name for evermore: for great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell." A consideration of the free and unmerited love of God to sinners, in giving his Son to suffer and die for their salvation, is calculated to awaken in the breast of every true believer, a flame of the most ardent and pure affection. "We love him," saith the apostle John, "because he first loved us." Dear brethren, let us manifest our love to God, by a constant and zealous attachment to his cause, by a ready obedience to his commandments, and let the fruits of faith and labours of love in our lives and conversations, evidence that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

The same principle of divine grace in the soul which teaches us to love God, and makes us rejoice in his service, disposes us likewise to love all those who bear the image of our heavenly Father. If we love him that begat, we will also love those that are begotten of him. In vain do we profess the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus, while the fiercer passions of anger and contention govern our minds. The spirit of religion is the spirit of love, of harmony and peace. Read the discourses of the blessed Author of our religion to his disciples, and you will find that nothing was more frequently the subject of his admonitions. "A new commandment," saith the Redeemer, "I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." It is one of the strongest evidences of the reality of our religion, in the eye of the world, when we are united in the bonds of Christian endearment, and brotherly kindness. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another." God is love; he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Dear brethren, if our hearts are torn by angry and contending passions, if we are governed by the workings of envy and malice, we may rest assured that we have not the spirit of Christ; for the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: Charity teaches us to forbear one another, to forgive one another, and if any man hath a quarrel against any, that as God, for Christ's sake hath forgiven us, so also must we. It teaches us also to practise benevolence and hospitality. Religion enlarges the heart, and makes even the churl bountiful; "hence," saith

the apostle, "if any man see his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in that person?" How is it possible that persons should have an experience of the love of God in pardoning their sins, rescuing them from condemnation and death, and this at the expence of the sufferings and death of his own Son; and yet remain so hard and insensible to the sufferings of a brother, as to have no bowels of compassion for him? Let us therefore consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works.—There are many reasons why christians should abound in love one to another. Their relative situation, as children of the same Father, is a strong argument to this purpose: there is nothing more pleasing than to see brothers and sisters of the same family walking together in love and unanimity, officiously engaged in acts of reciprocal kindness—Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. Our own interest requires that we should be united in the bonds of mutual affection—our safety and happiness are concerned in it. Christians have many enemies to encounter in the world, and they are never so vulnerable, as when divided and at variance among themselves—then it is that the enemies of religion triumph; then it is that the adversary of souls takes occasion to disturb our peace, and tempt us from the path of duty;—but when we are unitedly engaged in the service of our God, when love, harmony and peace, discover themselves in all our actions; when with one consent, we are engaged for the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, then does the church become terrible as an army with banners, then are the foes of religion struck with terror, and converts are encouraged to the standard of Emmanuel.

But this heavenly principle disposes us not only to love God supremely, and to serve him with ardour and delight—it not only unites to our brethren in the Lord, in the endearing bonds of affection; but it teaches us to regard every creature of the human family with the utmost benevolence and philanthropy.—It does not indeed instruct us to love the vices of the wicked, but it requires us to seek after their happiness here and hereafter. If we have ourselves experienced the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, if almighty grace has turned us from the error of our ways, and rescued us from going down to the pit, we cannot without some emotions of pity, behold our fellow-creatures, rushing on in the broad way to ruin:—We must at least, feel a desire, to warn them of their danger and instruct them in the way of escape, through a dear Redeemer. Even

those who are enemies to our interest and happiness in the world, are to be treated with kindness and love; charity not only suffers long, but suffers long and is kind! It is in this point of view, an imitation of a most endearing attribute of the Divine Being, who is kind to the unthankful and disobedient, who causeth his sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and upon the unjust.

Dear brethren, the importance of the subject we have been attending to, will appear from the following considerations:—
1st. That though we possess the most brilliant and shining gifts, so as to speak with the tongues of men and of angels, unless our hearts are actuated by this heavenly principle, we are but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Yea, though we had the gift of prophecy, and understood all mysteries and all knowledge; and had all faith so as to remove mountains, yet if this divine principle ceased to operate on our minds, we should still be found wanting in the sight of God. Yea, though bountiful to the last degree, we should give all our goods to feed the poor; and zealous in the cause of religion, even to suffer martyrdom in its defence, yet, unless these splendid acts of liberality and devotion, originated in a principle of love to God and man, they will profit us nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

A second argument for the importance of cultivating this heavenly principle in the soul, is, that it shall abide with us after death—it is this which shall outlive the grave, and ascend with us to the regions of immortal felicity. Charity never faileth! but whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away. All the accomplishments of nature and art shall die and descend with us into the grave; even faith and hope, those friendly and helpful companions of our pilgrimage through life, shall then no longer attend us; the one being swallowed up in sight, the other in enjoyment; but charity will remain an eternal and increasing principle—

This is the grace, that lives and sings,
When faith and hope shall cease;
'Tis this shall strike our joyful strings,
In the sweet realms of bliss.

Let us, by contemplating on the unspeakable love of God, in redeeming our souls from death, call forth the warmest af-

CIRCULAR LETTER.

fections of our hearts to him who hath done such great things for us: and let us, as brethren, endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Let us manifest our love to sinners by warning them of their danger, and praying for their salvation. That the Lord may prosper Zion, and make her converts as the stars of heaven, or the sand upon the sea-shore for multitude, is the prayer of your brethren in a dear Redeemer.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the Association,

JOSEPH FLOOD, *Moderator.*
JOHN BOGGS, Jun. *Clerk.*

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