

286.175

MINUTES

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OF

THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE

FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION,

HELD AT SOUTH BENSON MEETING-HOUSE,

On Saturday the 16th of September, 1815.



AN Introductory Sermon having been delivered by Elder John Taylor, from Psalms 133, 1 verse, "*Behold how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity.*"

Messengers from eight Churches appeared and took their seats. By request, Elders John Penny and John Scott, officiated, the former as Moderator, the latter as Clerk *pro tem.*

Letters, or Messages and Messengers were then received from the Churches as follows :—

CHURCHES.

MESSENGERS.

South-Benson.—Wm. Hickman, jr. Geo. Brown.

Salt-River.—John Penny, Jacob Allison, John Pullam.

Twinns.—John Scott. Wm. Blanton.

Hopewell.—John Brown, Reuben Long, Jesse Grady.*

Mount-Pleasant.—Jeremiah Green, John Long, Daniel James, Robert Church.

Forks of Elkhorn.—Wm. Graham, Carter Blanton, Joseph Edrington, Wm. Hickman, senr.*

Mouth of Elkhorn.—John Bartlett.

Big-Spring.—S. M. Noel, John Taylor, Thos. Suter, George Hol-
loway.*

Note.—Names of Ministers are in Italics—and those to whose names this sign (*) is prefixed were absent.

Whereupon, the same Moderator and Clerk who had been appointed *pro tem.* were by vote duly elected.

Elders—Webber, Cook and sundry other brethren were invited to seats in the Council.

The following propositions were submitted, discussed and adopted :

First.—Agreed that the Churches represented in this council, do unite to form an Association in Union with those Associations from whence these Churches came—to wit: Long-run, Elkhorn and North-District ; with which Associations, together with those in Union with them, a correspondence is invited.

Second.—Agreed that this Associate Body be known by the name of “FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION.”

The following Constitution having been submitted, after ample discussion and deliberation, was adopted :

CONSTITUTION OF THE FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION.

Article 1st.—In cases of difficulty or difference, either in point of doctrine or administration, wherein any one Church is concerned in her Peace, Union and Edification ; or any member or members of any Church are injured, in or by any proceedings, in censures, not agreeable to truth and order ; in such cases it is expedient, that the Church should labor in a Gospel way to remove it ; not omitting, when necessary, to call to her assistance, helps agreed on by those concerned. But, when her labors prove ineffectual, and the case, with consent of the Church is referred to the decision of the Association, it is understood and agreed, that such decision when made, shall be final and conclusive.

Art. 2d.—In cases of difficulty or difference, wherein two or more Churches are concerned, it is considered expedient that those Churches labor with diligence by Gospel means and with Christian forbearance and submission, to adjust and remove the difficulty or difference, not omitting, when necessary; to call to their assistance, helps selected or agreed on by those concerned—but when those labors prove ineffectual, & the case by consent of the Churches concerned, is referred to the decision of the Association, it is understood and agreed, that such decision, when made, shall be final and conclusive.

Art. 3d.—To remove all doubt, in future, relative to the powers possessed by the Association, it is expressly declared, that the Association has not power to dissolve a Church constitution, nor to diminish, add to, change or modify the Constitution of any Church. But the Asso-

ciation has power, 1st over her members while in session, and may reprove or expel them for disorder. 2d, Over Churches so far only as to suspend them from privileges in this body, and to drop them from this connexion.

Art. 4th.—It is the province of the Association, to submit and recommend to the consideration of the Churches, any subject or matter of a general nature, which she may conceive will advance the prosperity of ‘*the Church*,’ and spread the spiritual reign of Christ.

Art. 5th.—It is the province of the Association, to see that the Churches in her connexion, are stably and regularly supplied with Ministers, so far as circumstances will admit.

Art. 6th.—It will not be the province or privilege of the Association, to concern with the domestic matters or internal affairs of Churches, or of any Church, except in cases referred to her decision according to the requisitions of this Constitution.

On motion, the principles of Union between Elkhorn and South Kentucky Associations, were read and adopted by unanimous vote.

PRINCIPLES OF UNION.

1st. That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the infallible Word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.

2d. That there is one only True God, and in the Godhead or Divine Essence there are Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

3d. That by nature we are fallen and depraved creatures.

4th. That salvation, regeneration, sanctification and justification are by the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

5th. That the saints will finally persevere through grace to glory.

6th. That believers’ baptism, by immersion, is necessary to the receiving of the Lord’s Supper.

7th. That the salvation of the righteous, and punishment of the wicked, will be eternal.

8th. That it is our duty to be tender and affectionate to each other, and study the happiness of the children of God in general, and to be engaged singly to promote the honor of God.

9th. And that the preaching Christ tasted death for every man, shall be no bar to communion.

On motion, the following Committee were appointed to prepare Rules of Decorum, to be reported at the next Conference:—John Penny, S. M. Noel, J. Taylor, J. Scott and Wm. Hickman, junr. or any three.

Agreed to send Letters, inviting a Correspondence with the three Associations from whence these Churches came, by messengers as follows:—To Long-run, J. Penny, J. Scott, J. Taylor, Wm. Hickman, junr. and S. M. Noel.—To Elkhorn, J. Taylor, S. M. Noel, R. Long, Geo. Holloway, Wm. Hickman, and Jer. Green.—To North District, John Taylor and Robert Church.

Agreed, that the Messengers aforesaid, bear a copy of our Minutes to those Associations—also, that a copy be sent to the other Associations in the Union, as an invitation to correspondence.

Agreed, that the next Conference be held at Mount Pleasant Meeting-house, (three miles North of Frankfort) on the third Saturday in September, 1816. That the Introductory Sermon be delivered by Elder Scott, and a Circular Letter be prepared by Elder Noel.

After prayer by the Moderator, the Conference adjourned.

Signed by order of the Association,

JOHN PENNY, *Moderator.*

J. SCOTT, *Clerk.*

Note.—When Elkhorn Association was requested to recommend some rule of representation to guide the Churches, as to the number of Messengers which each should send:—She replied, “Let the Churches act at Discretion.” As there are but few Churches at this time in the Franklin Association, sound ‘Discretion’ will admit of their sending a much larger number of Messengers than usual. This is one advantage resulting from small Associations.

Note 2d.—It is the privilege of every Church, to remonstrate against any part of the Constitution in her Letter to the next conference; without this, her silence will be construed into acquiescence, or implied reception—such is the understanding of the Association.