



TRANSCRIPT OF THE RECORD BOOK OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH WINDHAM, VERMONT

At [old] Col. David Cobb Windham January 12, 1807

Persuant to Letter missive from the Baptist Church of Christ in Jamaica to the church of the same faith in Wardsborough & Andover to Constitute a church from that part of Jamaica Church which live in Windham there met at Windham from Wardsborough Elder Stephen Choat, Deacon Samuel B[ailey?], Brother Hinsdale Hammond, Brother Aaron Draper, Brother John Greenwood, and from Andover Elder Joel Manning, Deacon Samuel Manning, Brother James Sparker & Ira Putnam & formed into an Executive Council by choosing Elder Joel Manning Moderator, Deacon Samuel Manning Scribe and by desire of the church the Deacon Thomas Baker from Newfane, Brother Wm. Holmes from Stratton, and after looking to God for directions the church read their proceedings relative to the Business of this day.

2d This article of faith & Covenant of those who wish to be constituted as a church were read & examined

3d They were examined respecting their ideas of Discipline practice situation &c.

4th The council having retired by themselves voted satisfied with their system of Doctrine

5th Voted satisfied with their ideas of church Discipline & practical godliness

6th Voted to answer the request of those who have desired it & constitute them a separate church

7th The right hand of fellowship was given to the Church at Windham by Elder Manning

Joel Manning Moderator

Samuel Manning Scribe

The following were presented as the original members of the church presented to the council by John Rugg

David Bennett & wife Abigail
Moses Bennet & wife Ruby Daggett
Capt. David Cobb & wife Esther
Nathan Barrett & wife Sally Bennett
Zadoc Barrett & wife Esther
Calvin Barret & wife Mary Polly
Abel Gleason & wife Catherine
Samuel Thompson & wife Abigail
Col Dan'l Cobb & wife Hannah
Phineas Chamberlain
Nathaniel Woodcock & Susanna

Rufus Hoskins & Esther
Jonathan Gale & wife Sally Hoskins
Polly Wheeler Bennett
Abram Gage
Abram Stockwell
Reuben Woodcock
Samuel Gage
Sally Cobb
Wm Cobb
John Rugg

CONFESSION OF THE FAITH OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN WINDHAM

1st We believe the Scriptures of the old and new testament are the word of God and the only rule of Faith and practice.

2nd We believe there is but one living and true God that there are three persons in the God-head, Father, Son and Holy Ghost who are equal in nature, power and glory and that the Son and Holy Ghost are as truly and properly God as the Father.

3rd We believe that God created our first parents upright and gave them His Law requiring Good and forbidding evil they [being?] in honor abode not but did willfully transgress the law of their Creator by eating the forbidden fruit and all we in them became dead in sin and wholly defiled in all our moral powers and facilities they being the root and by God's appointment standing in the stead of all mankind conveyed the corruption of their nature to all their posterity so that we are all by nature Children of wrath servants of sin subjects of Death and all the miseries temporal and eternal which are the consequence of Sin and and by their original guilt and corruption we are utterly indisposed and opposite all good and wholly inclined to all evil.

4th We believe that before the world began God did elect or choose a certain number of the fallen race of man in Christ Jesus unto everlasting salvation that they should be holy and without blame before him in love having predestined them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will.

5th We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ being set up from everlasting as mediator of the new Covenant did engage to be the surety of his people and did in the fulness of time really assume human nature in perfect holiness in which nature he yielded a perfect obedience to the

law of God being obedient unto death obtaining all those blessings which are needful for them both for time and eternity.

6th We believe that this atonement made by Christ is sufficient for the sins of all mankind so that life and salvation is freely offered to all and all those and those only who repent and believe the gospel will obtain eternal happiness.

7th We believe that the justification of God's elect is only by the righteousness of [declared?] by his obedience and death imputed without the consideration of any work done by them that the free and full pardon of all their sins and transgressions is only through the blood of Christ according to the riches of his grace.

8th We believe that the work of regeneration, faith and sanctification is not the act of man's natural free will and power but of the mighty efficacious and irresistible grace of God.

9th We believe that all those who are chosen by God the Father, redeemed by the Son and sanctified by the Holy Spirit shall certainly and finally persevere to the end so that none of them shall ever perish but have everlasting life.

10th We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ to be continued until his Second Coming and that the former is requisite to the latter that is to say those are to be admitted to the communion of the Church who upon the confession of their faith have been baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

11th We Believe that the first day of the week commonly called the Lord's Day is to be observed as a day of religious worship and wholly regarded to the Lord.

12th We believe that civil authority is God's appointment and is designed for the benefit of the poor as well as the rich for the defense of their civil rights and privileges and that the civil magistrate's authority extends no further than to punish or order transgressions of civil law without pretending to dictate in the worship of the eternal which belongs only to Jesus Christ the Great Law Giver and Head of the Church neither ought it to be used to decide between brother and brother.

13th We believe there will be a resurrection of the dead bodies both of the just and unjust and that Christ will come a second time to judge both the quick and the dead when he will doom the wicked to endless destruction and receive his own people into his kingdom and glory where they shall forever be with Him.

COVENANT

We do now, in the presence of the all seeing and most glorious God, and before Angels and Men, give ourselves to the Lord Jehovah Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and avouch him this day to be our God, our Guide, and the portion of our souls forever, and to adhere to the Lord Jesus Christ as the great head of his church, and receive him as our Prophet Priest and King, and rely on him alone to bring us to everlasting blessedness--

We acknowledge our everlasting and indispensable obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly in all our several stations and relations in life, and to devote all our time, talents, and advantages to the service of God, to hold communion together in the worship of God in the ordinances of the gospel and in the discipline of the Church, promising to watch over one another in love, engaging by divine assistance to walk in our houses with a perfect heart, and to train up those committed to our care in the way of Godliness, promising to watch not only against those that are reckoned more gross evils but against all tattling and backbiting, disregarding promises and not fulfilling engagements, foolish talking and jesting which are not convenient for us, spending time idly at taverns or elsewhere, vain and unnecessary conversations on Lord's Day, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine according to the glorious gospel of Christ, as we are or may be guided by his word, praying he would further and more gloriously open to us the mysteries of his kingdom, flying to the blood of the everlasting covenant for the pardon of our many errors, praying the Lord to strengthen us to every good work, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ our Lord to whom be glory forever.

The above excerpt is from pages 1-3 of the record book of Baptist Church in South Windham.

Excerpt From *A History of the Baptists in Vermont* by Henry Crocker

“The story of the origin of the South Windham church is fully given in a letter from Rev. Stephen Choate to the editor of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, under date of Wardsboro, April 7, 1807. In the course of the previous year there had been some revival in Windham. It spread in a part of Jamaica and Windham in a glorious manner. Almost every house in the neighborhood, where the reformation spread, shared in it. Strong and hostile opposers were won to Christ. The work was principally in Windham, where there was no Baptist church and only a few members of the Jamaica church. On the 5th of [September], Mr. Choate preached to a large assembly. After the sermon ten recent converts related their experience and were fellowshipped. Although the meeting began early it was late when the people repaired to the water, about half a mile distant, in the edge of the woods, a beautiful and convenient place for the baptism and the specta-

tors. Here with great solemnity the ten were buried with Christ in baptism. After the ordinance Brother Baker, a candidate for the ministry who was present, gave a word of exhortation and the people returned to their homes. A meeting was appointed for the evening and at "early candle light" the people collected. Mr. Baker preached, and considerable time was spent in conference and prayer, and four person related their experience, and plans were made for a baptism in the morning. Sunday morning, September 6, four were baptized.

On the 10th of October, Mr. Choate and Elder Henry Chamberlain were at Windham and the examination of candidates was continued, one of whom had been a violent opposer. Eight gave accounts of their experience and by that time it was so near evening that there was not time to wait for others who wished to go forward. Again the woodland baptistry was visited and four received the ordinance. In the evening three more candidates were examined, and in the morning seven put on Christ in baptism. On the 12th of January following 1807, Mr. Choate assisted in the organization of these brethren into a church of forty-three members, most of whom had been converted in that revival season. Under such delightful circumstances the South Windham church had its origin."

Crocker, Rev. Henry. *A History of the Baptists in Vermont*. Bellows Falls: P.H. Gobie Press, 1913. pp. 217-218.

Chronology of South Windham

Baptist Church's early days

1812 - 85 members

1826 - First meeting house erected

1842 - 194 members (the zenith)

1853 - Vestibule, cupola & bell added

1895 - Vestry added, renovations done

First Pastor: Deacon Thomas Baker, a shoemaker by trade , who followed his craft while in the ministry, the salary being but \$104.00, one-fourth in cash, the rest in grain and labor.

Throughout its history, at least 14 young men have licensed by this church to preach the gospel.