

PROCEEDINGS OF THE UNIVERSALIST
CONVENTION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, A.D. 1831

The ministers and delegates from the several Associations comprising the Universalist Convention of the State of New York, met at the house of Br. S. R. [Stephen Rensselaer] Smith, in Clinton, Oneida county, on Wednesday, May 11th, 1831, agreeably to adjournment, and after uniting in prayer with Br. J. [Job] Potter, proceeded to organize the council.

1. Chose Br. W. [William] Underwood, Moderator; and Br. Geo. W. Messinger, Clerk. Adjourned.

2. Met on Thursday morning, in the Free Church, and united in prayer with Br. J. [John] Freeman.

3. Invited Br. W. [Warren] Skinner to a seat in the Council, as a Committee from the General Convention of the N.E. States, and others.

4. Chose Brs. D. [Dolphus] Skinner, P. [Pitt] Morse, and J. Wallace a committee to receive requests for letters of fellowship and ordination; who reported, before the close of the session, in favor of conferring ordination on Br. R. [Rufus] O. Williams, and granting letters of fellowship to Brs. S. [Savillion] W. Fuller and B. [Benjamin] H. Fuller—which report was accepted.

5. Whereas, we learn that Geo. W. Brooks, formerly a preacher in our connexion, is about to apply for restoration to fellowship, and having knowledge of his pervious general character, therefore,

Resolved, unanimously, That we thus apprise our brethren generally of our decided disapprobation of his conduct and character, and our sense of his unworthiness to enter the Christian ministry; and we earnestly recommend a careful inquiry into this subject, and the character of said Brooks, to all the Associations of our religious order to whom he may apply for fellowship.

6. Heard the report of the committee of discipline for the last year, which was, that no complaints had been presented to them.

7. Chose Brs. P. Morse, D. Skinner and J. Wallace, a Committee of Discipline for the ensuing year.

8. Whereas, the "General Convention of the New-England States, and others," appointed a committee, at its last session, to visit this Convention, "for the purpose of ascertaining the relation subsisting between" us, therefore,

Resolved, That this Convention acknowledge with pleasure its regard for said General Convention, as a sister ecclesiastical body—that we have ever expressed a Christian fellowship for that body, and that we regard each as independent of the other, so far as is consistent with strict and mutual fellowship.

9. Chose Brs. J. Wallace, D. Skinner, and C. F. [Clement Fall] Le Fevre, as a committee to visit the General Convention of New-England States, and

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others, at its next session, for the purpose of expressing to it the Christian fellowship of this Convention.

10. Chose Brs. S. R. Smith, D. Skinner, and A. B. [Aaron Bort] Grosh, as a committee to collect important facts, and prepare an address to the several Associations, and to the Universalist and liberal portion or community, on the subject of establishing a literary institution in this state, not only for general purposes of science and literature, but with a particular view of furnishing, with an education, young men designed for the ministry of reconciliation.

11. Proposed for the consideration and decision of this Convention, at its next session, the following:

Resolved, That the Constitution of this Convention be so amended, that the annual meetings shall commence on the *last*, instead of the *second* Wednesday in May.

12. *Voted*, That Brs. D. Skinner and A. B. Grosh, prepare and publish these minutes in the Magazine and Advocate, accompanied by a circular letter.

13. Adjourned, after uniting in prayer with Br. R. O. Williams, to meet again in Utica, on the second Wednesday in May, 1832.

W. UNDERWOOD, Moderator

GEO. MESSINGER, *Clerk*

PUBLIC SERVICES

WEDNESDAY MORNING

1. Prayer by Br. T. J. [Thomas Jefferson] Whitcomb—2. Sermon by Br. I. D. [Isaac Dowd] Williamson, John iv:13,14.—3. Benediction by Br. S. R. Smith.

AFTERNOON.

1. Prayer by Br. D. Skinner—2. Sermon by Br. W. Skinner, Acts v:29.—3. Benediction by Br. W. Underwood.

EVENING.

1. Prayer by Br. W. Skinner—2. Sermon by Br. W. [William] I. Reese, Psalm 1:14.—3. Benediction by Br. A. B. Grosh.

ORDINATION SERVICES

THURSDAY MORNING

1. Prayer by Br. W. I. Reese—2. Sermon by Br. P. Morse, 1 Tim. iv:16.—3. Ordaining prayer by Br. S. R. Smith.—4. Delivery of the Scriptures and charge by Br. W. Skinner.—5. Right Hand of Fellowship by Br. I. D. Williamson.—6. Benediction by Br. P. Morse.

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LAY DELEGATES PRESENT.

Brs. Adam Frink, Russia; Eli Tarbell, Smithville; Oliver Sabin, Marshall; Thomas Biddlecom, Deerfield; and Stephen Schaack, Albany.

MINISTERING BRETHERN PRESENT.

Brs. S. R. Smith, Clinton; Pitt Morse, Watertown; D. Skinner, A. B. Grosh and W. Underwood, Utica; Jonathan Wallace and Benjamin H. Fuller, Potsdam; W. I. Reese, late of Portland, Maine; Warren Skinner, Cavendish, Vt.; Thomas J. Whitcomb, Hudson; Stephen Miles, Lee; Savillion W. Fuller, Boonville; Allen Fuller, Middleborough, Mass.; Rufus O. Williams, Amsterdam; Alfred Peck, Sheshequin, Pa.; Isaac D. Williamson, Albany; Job Potter, Cooperstown; George Messinger, Salisbury; John Freeman, Hamilton; Walter Bullard, Sauquoit.

CIRCULAR.

To the Associations, Churches, and Societies of believers in the State, as also to those abroad, and to all for whom our common Lord gave himself a ransom, to be testified in due time; the ministers and delegates of the New-York Universalist Convention, sendeth greetings of peace and goodwill:—

Never was the Convention favored with a greater attendance of ministering brethren, more visible manifestations of divine goodness, or a more active operation of our holy faith in producing peace, joy, mutual affection and kindness among ourselves. Nor was this spirit confined to our council only, but in the public services a weighty and joyful solemnity prevailed—all seemed to feel, to hear, and to understand alike—to drink from the same fountain of living waters—from the same noble motive of love supreme and divine—and to the production of the same happy effects on ourselves and others.—Long may such a cheering zeal and heavenly spirit animate and protect our spreading Zion.

A young brother received ordination at the hands of the council, and was welcomed with the surcharged feelings of a joyful anticipation to the labors of the great Teacher of Truth; while two others received tokens of our confidence in their talents, zeal and integrity, in the shape of letters of fellowship. May their course brighten in usefulness and faith, until summoned to experience that perfect day of immortal knowledge which shall enlighten all intelligences when God shall be all in all.

Our cause at large is still prospering and to prosper, and, through the blessing of God, the way of the wicked has been frequently turned upside down, and revivals of sectarianism been made to promote the extension of the pure gospel, by opening the eyes of the blind, and bowing down, beyond endurance, the indolent and careless. Thus has the wrath of man been

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CONVENTION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, A.D. 1831

made to praise God, and to promote the welfare of those who trust in him as the Saviour of all men.

The great want of ministers to break the bread of life unto our destitute societies, has caused the Convention to pass a resolution, and appoint a committee, on the subject of erecting a suitable seminary in this state for literary, scientific and theological purposes. To the forthcoming report of that committee, we refer you for further particulars, commending the subject to your especial consideration and fostering care.

The other business of the Council in general is equally, though perhaps not so immediately important. As it engaged the particular attention, and full and free deliberation of the council, and was settled by their harmonious concurrence, we hope you will give to each article your candid attention, and, after mature conviction of its justice, your hearty assent and co-operation.—And may He whose we are, and whom we have endeavored to obey, guide us all into a knowledge of his truth—enlighten us by his wisdom—support us by his power—console us by his mercies—judge us in righteousness, and animate us in the path of duty by his love, till his whole pleasure shall be accomplished respecting our race, and his whole will be performed in heaven and on earth, by our salvation from sin, and restoration to immortal purity and unending bliss.—*Amen.* Per order,

A. B. GROSH

Evangelical Magazine & Gospel Advocate, Utica NY, Sat. 21 May 1831

Transcribed with notes added on 24 Oct 2012 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY