

A
NARRATIVE
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
General Assembly

Of the Elders and Messengers of the Baptized Churches sent from divers parts of *England* and *Wales*, which began in *London* the *2d* of *June*, and ended the *8th* of the same, 1691.

[Owning the Doctrine of Personal Election and Final Perseveraice.]

Hag. 1. 4.

Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled Houses; and this House lie waste?

London, Printed in the Year, 1691.

A
General Epistle
To all the
CHURCHES

Dearly beloved Brethren,

THE God of all Grace hath brought us into a near and spiritual Relation to you, and you have such a rooted Interest in our Hearts, that through Grace we shall always be ready to lay out our selves to the utmost of our Capacity, to promote the eternal Well-being and Happiness of your Souls: Our Sighs, Groans and Prayers in secret, and our Labours in Publick, in all the Holy Administrations of the House of God, are sincerely directed to this End; God is our Witness, who hath called us out (though very unworthy) to this Service, in pursuance of his own Glory, and his gracious Design towards you. And whereas you have freely chosen us as your Messengers, and entrusted us with Power to consider, discourse about, and conclude upon those Things proposed to us, in order to the general Good of those Churches to which we respectively belong, we have addressed our selves to this Work, with earnest supplication to the Father of Lights, for his special Assistance and Direction therein: And we are not without some good Assurance, that he bowed his Ear unto us, in regard of that Harmony and good Agreement which was observable in most of our Debates and Conclusions. And though we can impose nothing upon you, yet hereby is derived a greater Authority unto what was concluded, and it deserves to be so much the more regarded by you. We do heartily wish that you would look back to those Things which you were formerly pressed and exhorted to, in the two last Assemblies of your Messengers, for the promoting of the Glory of God, and your own Good; and although we may not have found the full End of our Endeavours in all Things answered, yet we bless God in many Things we have; which gives us encouragement to hope, that we may have some Success in this, who unfeignedly desire the thorow Reformation, the happy Settlement, and firm Peace and Well-being of all those Christian Churches we are immediately concerned with.

One thing formerly pressed upon you, was a liberal Contribution, by a Free-will Offering, and quarterly Subscription or Collections towards the raising of a Publick Stock, for Ends and Uses fully known to you. And we return you our hearty Thanks for what you have already done, and doubt not but that thereby Fruit will abound to your Account in the Day of Christ: And we hope you will not grow weary in well-doing, having the Promise of God that you shall then reap. Many Things might be urged to quicken you in this good Work, whereby several Labourers in the Lord's, Vineyard have been already relieved; several pious, studious, and hopeful young Men have been assisted in their acquirement of Learning; and some have been sent forth to visit the Churches, and to give their helping Hand in order to their Settlement, according to the Rule of the Gospel. But we hope that this disposure of your Money, according to your Intention, may render Motives of that kind very much unnecessary: However, that we may not be wanting in a Matter of this Nature, wherein the Honour of God, the keeping up this Publick Worship in the World, the Edification of Churches, and the Conversion of the Residue of God's Chosen is so much concerned, we shall humbly take the boldness to press you to a farther progress therein; and the rather, because several of our Fellow-Christians, who after us fell into this Method, have far exceeded us: And why should not the Glory of Christ, and the Advancement of his Kingdom, be as dear to us as to them? We hope it is, and therefore will not despair of prevailing with you.

If any Churches, or Members, upon a review of what is past, shall be sensible of their own Defect, we desire it may be made up, lest others should be discouraged, and the Work in a little time cease. Things of this Nature never prosper well without a free and chearful concurrence of all jointly concerned therein, according to their Ability; and should we find such a concurrence generally, it

would be matter of great rejoicing to us, and be esteemed by us as a remarkable Effect of the Spirit of Love, which is diffused through all the Members of Christ's Mystical Body.

To further such a Concurrence, let us consider,

First, From whom we have received all that we enjoy, and what Promises of future Supplies we have through Grace an Interest in.

Secondly, That we are but Stewards of what we have; and that God can, by his secret and just Providence, soon take away our Stewardship, if we are not found faithful therein.

Thirdly, That the End of what we have, is the Honour of God; *Prov. 3. 9. Honour the Lord with thy Substance, and with the first Fruits of all thine Increase.*

Fourthly, That the keeping up God's Publick Worship, which is inclusive of all the Ends proposed in this Publick Stock, is a principal way of honouring God; and all other ways of expending what we possess, are inferior to this.

Fifthly, That Giving in this way, will be a great evidence of the sincerity of our Profession, and will be a great comfort in the latter End.

Other Things of this Nature might be added, but we hope that God's Grace will carry you beyond all that our Arguments can amount to, as was of old exemplified in the Churches of *Macedonia*, *2 Cor. 8. 1, 2.*

In the next place, We would desire you that live in the Country, to send up your particular Messengers to this General Meeting, that we may have the more abundant evidence of your Approbation of that good Work intended and carried on therein; and let not the incident Charges you are thereby exposed unto, be a discouragement to you, we being perswaded that our Friends here in the City, who are not liable to such Charges, will make a Compensation by a more liberal Contributing unto the Publick Stock.

To conclude;

Dear Brethren, We commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them who are sanctified, amongst whom we desire to be found, who subscribe our selves,

Your Brethren in the Faith, and Fellowship of the Gospel,

Han. Knollyes,

John Tomkins,

Chr. Price,

Andrew Gifford,

Benjamin Keach,

Sam. Buttall,

George Barrett,

John Ward,

Rich. Adams,

John Eccles,

William Collins,

James Jones,

Hercules Collins,

Thomas Winnell,

Tho. Harrison,

John Butt.

Nath Crabb,

|

Signed in the Name, and by the Appointment of the whole Assembly, *June the 8th*, 1691.

A NARRATIVE of the Proceedings of the Elders and Messengers of the Baptized Congregations, in their General Assembly in London, begun the second Day of June, 1691, and ended the eighth of the fame Month.

WE the said Elders and Messengers of the Churches of Jesus Christ assembled together, having it under our consideration how much the Name of God, the Honour of the Gospel, and the Good of all the Churches to whom we belong, is concerned in our Perseverance in those good Things resolved upon in our former General Assemblies, Do agree and resolve unanimously, for the better increase and continuance of the Fund, to propound it to, and exhort all our Churches, and each Member thereof, with all our Christian Friends and Well-wishers thereto, to a liberal and chearful Contribution, as God hath blessed them in the good things of this Life.

1. By their bringing in their Free-will-Offering, that have not yet paid it in (propounded at first as the foundation of this Fund) with all readiness of Mind, as a Sacrifice with which God is well pleased.
2. By the continuance of their Quarterly-Subscriptions, according as God shall bless them.
3. By a liberal Contribution in a Quarterly-Collection, which we unanimously agree to promote in all our Churches and Assemblies, to this end that all whom God hath blessed with Ability and a ready Mind, may have opportunity to shew their good Will for the promoting those great and good Things for which this Fund is raised, (*viz.*) For the support of such Ministers which the Churches to which they belong, through Poverty are not able to supply with what is necessary to their comfortable Subsistence; that so they may be encouraged to take the better care of their own Charge, and to preach the Gospel where there is need, and a door open; and also Godly young Men, Members of the Churches, whom God hath gifted, and are approved of, may be instructed in the Knowledg of the Tongues in which the holy Scriptures were written.

And we judge it not reasonable that they who contribute nothing to the Fund, should desire any thing out of it. Therefore it is expected, that those Churches which are poor, should make their Collections for the Uses aforesaid, and raise what they can, be it more or less. Moreover, We judge that those that have subscribed either to the Free-will-Offering, or other Contribution for the Uses aforesaid, ought in conscience to perform what they have thereby engaged to do: For although before it was their own, yet after their subscribing, it remains so no longer; see *Acts 5. 4.*

It's further agreed, that what is or shall be gathered by the Free-will-Offerings, not yet paid in, and what is collected and to be collected, by Subscription; as also what shall be gathered by the first publick quarterly Collection, by and from all the Churches both in the City of *London* and the Countrey, shall be paid in, by the Twenty ninth Day of *September* next, with a Signification of what use or uses they design the Money so paid in for.

And for the better Encouragement of this good Work, it is agreed as followeth.

1. That the Trustees do put down the particular Uses assigned to every particular Sum, as in the last Narrative is expressed.
2. That the particular Sums that are given to one and the same use, be put together, and kept in a distinct Account by it self, by Brother *King* and Brother *Harrison*.
3. That the Money given to one use, be not disposed of to another.

It is also Agreed and Resolved, That no Money shall be paid or disbursed out of the Fund, but what is agreed upon by this present Assembly, until this Assembly shall by the good Providence of God meet again here in *London*, in 1692.

For the preserving of Peace and Concord amongst the Churches of our Association; in a due Tenderness to all the Members in communion with us, the following Questions were proposed, and Answers concluded thereupon as followeth;

Query 1. *Whether a Person Excommunicated, or withdrawn from by the Church he is in Fellowship with, and judgeth himself wronged therein, may not have Relief in that Case?*

Carried in the Affirmative.

Query 2. *What then is the Regular way such a Person ought to take for Relief?*

1. Such a Person ought (after all due endeavours in Humility and Love to satisfy the Church so dealing with him, of the wrong done him therein, and if not relieved thereby) to address himself to some other Church for Communion.
2. That Church to whom the Person so dealt with, shall propound himself, ought by their Messengers to enquire into the Grounds and Reasons of the Church's dealing with the said Person, with the manner or way of their proceeding against him to such a Sentence, that they may as fully as possible inform themselves of the ground of the Church's so dealing with him, of the Crime or Crimes alledged against him, with the Circumstances thereof for their own Information, how to carry it both to the Church and the Person so dealt with by them.
3. That the Church so dealing with a Member, ought to give a full and true Account accordingly in all Brotherly Love and Meekness, from the Mutual Obligation that one Church stands in to another, to keep their Communion pure, being all Members of that Body whereof Christ is Head.
4. And if upon due Inquiry and Information had of the Case, the Church to whom the aggrieved Person shall propound for Fellowship, shall see cause to judg that he has received wrong therein; then they ought in all Brotherly Love to endeavour to restore the Person dealt with to his former Communion, if he shall desire it, or else to receive him into Communion with themselves.

An Account of the several Associations of the Churches in England and Wales.

The Association of the Churches in *London, Middlesex, Kent and Essex.*

*Theobalds,
George-Yard,
Devonshire-Square,
Morefields,
Joyners-Hall,
Houndsditch,
Virginia-Street,
Wapping,
Lymehouse,
Horsly-down,
Winchester-house,
Mile-end,
Richmond,
Turnum-green,
Mays-pond,
Sandwich,
Hatfield-Heath.*

The Association of the Churches in *Somerset, Dorset, Wilts, Gloucestershire, and Bristol.*

*Taunton,
Bridgwater,
Croscome,
Hallotrow,
Haycomb,
Killminton,
Hatch,
Periton-evil,
Dunster,
Froome,
Sarum,
Warmister,
Seghill,
Westberry,
Devizes,
Calne,
Milsom,
Bradford,
Southwick,
Malmesberry,
Ninisfield,
Sudbury,
Broadmead,
Fryers.*

The Association of the Churches in *Abbingdon, &c.*

*Abbingdon,
Wantage,
Longworth,
Oxford,
Faringdon,
Flinstock,
Mazithampton,
Cirencester,
Reading.*

The Association of the Churches in *Norfolk, and Suffolk, &c.*

*Norwich,
Pulham,
Sudbury,
Wisbich,
Debbitch,
Colechester.*

The Western Association of the Churches.

*Looe,
Plymouth,
Southams.
Bouye,
Southmoltowne,
Tyverton,
Exon,
Lyppet,
Dolwood,
Lyme,
Chard.*

The Association of the Churches in *Newcastle, Yorkshire, Northumberland and Cumberland.*

*Newcastle,
Bichbarn,
Ponterfract,
Broughton,
Eggermont,*

Woolverstone.

Hampshire Association.

*Christ church,
Ringwood,
Southampton,
Whit church.*

The Association of the Churches in
*Hartfordshire, Buckinghamshire and
Bedfordshire.*

*Kensworth,
Evershall,
Perton,
Hempstead,
Stutly,
Harlow,
Tring.*

The Association of the Churches in *Stepton*
and *Hadnam.*

Stepton, alias Steventon and Hadnam.

The Association of the Churches in South-
*Wales, Monmouthshire, and part of
Herefordshire.*

*Langone,
Bergavenny,
Lanwenarth,
Blaiegwent,
Golchon,
Graig yr Allt, and Lanvabon.*

Carmarthenshire, &c. Association.

*Ynys vach,
Rushacre,
Lanydwr.*

The Association of the Churches in
*Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire,
Leicestershire, and part of Herefordshire.*

*Bromsgrove,
Warwick,
Dimmuck,
Hereford,
Tewsbury,
Mortonhinmash,
Hooknorton,
Alcester,
Kilby.*

The next General Meeting is to be at *London* in the Week commonly called *Whitsun-week*, 1692, to begin on the third day of the Week (called *Tuesday*) in Payer and then on the fourth day to proceed on business.

FINIS

Advertisements.

Those who desire to have the Confession of Faith of all these Churches, may have them of Mr. *John Harris*, at the Sign of the Harrow in the *Poultry*. Price bound 1 s.

The Minister's Maintenance vindicated, published by the Elders in *London*. Price 6d.

Where also you may have that excellent Treatise of Baptism, wrote by Mr. *Philip Cary*. Price bound 2 s.

As also that very useful and profitable Book for Children and young People, called *Instructions for Children*; wrote by *Benj. Keach*. Price bound 6 d.

Distressed *Sion* relieved, a Poem. By *B. K.*

Antichrist stormed, and the time of the End. By *B. K.*

Both sold by *Nath. Crouch*, at the Bell in the *Poultry*.

An Exposition containing 2 Sermons on that Parabolical Speech of Our Saviour, *Matt.* 12. 43, 44, 45. By *B. Keach*.

Sold by *John Pike*, at the upper end of *Bread-street*. Price stitch'd 6 d.

This text was transcribed from scanned TIF files downloaded from Early English Books Online (EEBO – <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>), Reel position: Wing / 1748:11 and accessed through the University of Sydney Library. Copy from: British Library.

Transcription was by Mr Mark Smith, A Reformed Baptist's Disk (<http://www.vor.org/rbdisk>). © 2018