

Session VII. — 1818.

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Pittsburgh, May 26, 1818.

The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of the United States met, agreeable to adjournment, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Thomas Donnelly, from 1 Cor. 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us righteousness."

The Synod, being constituted, agreed to adjourn till tomorrow at 10 o'clock A.M.

The Moderator concluded by prayer.

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Pittsburgh, May 27, 1818.

Agreeable to adjournment Synod met and was constituted. Rev. Thomas Donnelly, in the absence of the Moderator, Rev. Robert Lusk, took the chair.

Thomas Donnelly, Moderator.

John Black, Clerk.

On calling the roll, there appeared and answered to their names, from the —

— Northern Presbytery. —		
Ministers.	Elders.	Congregations.
Alexander McLeod	— — — —	New York.
James R. Willson	— — — —	Coldenham.
Gilbert McMaster	— — — —	Duanesburgh.
James Milligan	— — — —	Ryegate.
— Middle Presbytery. —		
— — — —	John Renfrew	Conococheague.
John Black	William Gormley	Pittsburgh.
William Gibson	Robert Johnston	Cannonsburgh.
Matthew Williams	Robert Black	Pine Creek, Union, etc.
John Cannon	John Gill	Greensburgh.
Samuel Wylie	— — — —	— — — —

Western Presbytery.		
Jonathan Gill	- - - -	Massie's Creek.
John Kell	- - - -	Beech Woods.
Southern Presbytery.		
Thomas Donnelly	- - - -	Big Rocky Creek.
John Reilly	- - - -	Little Rocky Creek.

There were no ruling elders from the Northern Presbytery on account of distance, length of time, etc.

Revs. S. B. Wylie and Robert Lusk, of the Middle Presbytery, were absent.

Rev. Robert Wallace, of the Western Presbytery, was absent; and there were no ruling elders from this, or the Southern Presbytery, for the same reasons as above stated.

Rev. Jonathan Gill was introduced by Rev. John Black, as a regularly ordained minister and a member of the Western Presbytery. He was, on motion, invited to take his seat as a member of Synod. He took his seat accordingly.

On motion, Rev. Thomas Donnelly was appointed Moderator. The present Clerk was continued, and the Rev. John Reilly was appointed Assistant Clerk during the present session.

1. On motion the Rules of Synod were called for and read.

2. The Minutes of the last Synod were read, and unfinished business proceeded to. On motion of Rev. J. R. Willson a correction was introduced into the Minutes respecting the reports from congregations in relation to the act for supplying funds for the Theological Seminary.

3. The Committee on Overtures was called on to report. They were not in readiness. Referred to Friday next. Rev. J. R. Willson was added to the Committee.

4. Enquiry was made at the several ministers whether the thanksgiving and fast days, appointed at last Synod, had been duly observed. Answered in the affirmative.

5. The whole business of finances was referred till tomorrow forenoon.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock.

3 o'clock P.M.

The Court met and were called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut supra.

1. A Committee was appointed for apportioning the Argumentative Part of our Testimony. Revs. William Gibson, J. R. Willson and Alexander McLeod are that Committee.

2. The Missionary business was referred to a Committee to report thereon with all convenient speed. Revs. Gilbert McMaster and John Black are that Committee. Rev. John Kell was added to this Committee.

3. A Committee was appointed to enquire whether there be any, and if any, what causes exist in Divine Providence calling this Synod to the duties of fasting and thanksgiving, and report thereon at as early a period as possible. Revs. James Milligan, Matthew Williams and John Reilly to be that Committee.

4. The Superintendents of Theological Seminary are called on to report, generally, on the state of that institution as soon as convenient.

5. Dr. McLeod resigned his place in the Committee to enquire into what Amendments would be required in the National Government to constitute it the ordinance of God. Rev. J. R. Willson was substituted in the room of Dr. McLeod, and the Committee was appointed to report tomorrow.

6. Friday next is appointed for receiving Presbyterial reports.

7. Papers of whatever description, except Presbyterial reports, which are to come before Synod are now ordered to be laid on the table.

8. It was moved that the protest of Drs. McLeod and Black against the repeal of the Deficit Act be read. Negatived by Synod.

Court adjourned till tomorrow at 10 o'clock A.M.

Moderator concluded by prayer.

3 o'clock P.M.

The Court met, agreeable to adjournment, and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut supra.

1. The Committee on Finance were called to report. They presented the following report: That from the Treasurer's account current with the Seminary, it appears that Dr. Wylie has

Comment [NJP1]: No record is present of a 10 AM meeting, and no explanation is provided how this meeting was otherwise according to adjournment

received of the \$500. ordered to be paid to him, the sum of \$125.53, and that the balance in the treasury is \$99.81.

These sums were collected from the bounds of the Northern and Middle Presbyteries, as follows:

	\$	cts.
From the congregation of Ryegate, _ _ _	000	00
The congregations of <u>Galway and Duanesburgh</u> , having paid \$75. before, which was appropriated to other purposes by order of Synod, contributed to this object, _ _ _	000	00
From <u>Coldenham</u> people, who reported to last Synod \$30., there has as yet been received, _ _ _	000	00
The congregation of <u>New York</u> , as appears by the Treasurer's report to Dr. McLeod, _ _ _ _ _	100	00
The congregation of <u>Philadelphia</u> has accounted to Dr. Wylie for _ _ _ _ _	100	00
The congregation of <u>Conococheague</u> , _ _ _	31	81
<u>Greensburgh</u> congregation, _ _ _	33	00
<u>Pittsburgh</u> congregation, _ _ _	40	53
<u>Cannonsburgh</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Pine Creek</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Beaver</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Licking</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Xenia</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Beech Woods</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Princeton</u> , _ _ _	00	00
<u>Chester District, S.C.</u> , now received by Rev. John Reilly, _	84	00
The Church in <u>Tennessee</u> , _ _ _	00	00
Total, _ _	\$389.	34

Leaving the Synod still destitute of funds to pay the late Professor, _ _ _ \$110. 66

(Signed).

William Gormley.

The Synod accept this report and refer the state of the finances to the Superintendents of the Seminary to report thereon.

2. Two petitions were received from Cincinnati, praying that Mr. Samuel Robinson be continued with them another year. Referred to the Western Presbytery.

3. The Committee for apportioning the Argumentative

Part of the Testimony, which, with some amendments, was adopted, and is as follows: —

- (1) The consideration and the refutation of Infidelity to Rev. Dr. S. B. Wylie, to contain about 25 pages, 12 mo.
 - (2) Hopkinsianism to Rev. Dr. A. McLeod, 30 pp. 12 mo.
 - (3) The whole Antitrinitarian Controversy to the Rev. James Milligan, 25 or 30 pp.
 - (4) Universalism to Rev. John Kell, 25 pp.
 - (5) Arminianism to Rev. Dr. John Black, 40 pp.
 - (6) The consideration of the Lutheran and German Calvinists to Rev. J. R. Willson, to contain about 35 or 40 pp.
 - (7) Anabaptist Controversy to Rev. Gilbert McMaster, 30 pp.
 - (8) Popery and Prelacy to Rev. Thomas Donnelly, 35 pp.
 - (9) Methodism to Rev. Robert Lusk, 25 pp.
 - (10) Independency to Rev. John Gibson, 30 pp.
 - (11) General Assembly Presbyterian Church to Rev. John Cannon, 40 pp.
 - (12) Secession Controversy to Archibald Johnston, 35 pp.
 - (13) Reformed Dutch Church to Rev. Samuel Wylie, 20 pp.
 - (14) The consideration of the Civil Constitutions of America to Samuel W. Crawford, 25 pp.
- Adjourned till tomorrow at 10 o'clock A.M.
Moderator concluded by prayer.

Pittsburgh, May 29, 1818.

Synod met and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut antea.

1. The Minutes of the last sederunt were read
2. On motion, it was agreed that an Article on the consideration of the Civil Constitutions of the United States be added to the apportionment of the Argumentative Part of the Testimony, and this part was allotted to Samuel W. Crawford. (See the Schedule.)
3. The Committee appointed in relation to the National Government were then discharged.
4. The report of the Northern Presbytery was received, read, and accepted.
5. The Western Presbytery presented their report, which, with some verbal additions, was accepted. These reports exhibited

Comment [NJP2]: One line in the original, but not enough room here

the state of religion in their respective bounds to be rather growing ; the principles of the Reformation as becoming better understood, while yet much cause of lamentation remained that the progress of real religion and a due appreciation of moral order advanced with slow steps in all their borders. The Northern Presbytery had licensed a young man from the Seminary, a Mr. Melancthon Williams, who promised to be useful in the Church.

6. The Superintendents of the Theological Seminary presented a report which underwent much discussion, and was ordered to lie on the table. Made the order of the day for tomorrow.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow A.M.

Pittsburgh, May 30, 1818.

Synod met and was constituted. Same members ut antea.

1. The consideration of the Overtures was the subject of discussion, which occupied the greater part of the time of this sederunt. Several propositions were made respecting the disposal of these Overtures without coming to any definite conclusion. The present Committee was discharged, and ineffectual attempts were made to dispose of the Overtures. It was agreed to postpone the further consideration of the subject till Monday next.

2. Mr. Samuel Wylie was called to report what observations he had made in his travelling in the West, how he had been employed, and whatever might be useful to the concerns of the Church. He reported that he had visited the Church in Baltimore, Chambersburgh, Greensburgh, Pittsburgh, the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina & South Carolina, and had observed with pleasure an increasing desire for the knowledge of Reformation principles. That from a part of our vacancies in Tennessee he had received a call, which he had judged it his duty to reject ; that he thought much good might be done by sending a Missionary to the Illinois Territory, etc.

The Synod determined that Mr. Samuel Wylie be put under the care of the Middle Presbytery, who are hereby directed to take Mr. Wylie forthwith under trials for ordination, with a view to his being sent as a Missionary to the Illinois Territory.

Adjourned till Monday at 10 o'clock A.M.

Pittsburgh, June 1, 1818.

Agreeable to adjournment the Court met and was constituted. Messrs. Gill, Kell, Milligan, Williams and Johnston were absent.

1. On motion the sermon delivered by the Rev. Thomas Donnelly at the opening of Synod was considered. It was universally approved, and Mr. Donnelly was requested to furnish this Synod with a copy for publication as soon as possible, with which request Mr. Donnelly promised to comply.

2. Agreed that in relation to the Overtures lying before Synod, the following distribution shall be made.

(1) The Directory to Mr. Black.

(2) The Book of Discipline and Form of Covenanting to Dr. McLeod.

(3) The Form of Church Government to Mr. Willson.

(4) The Form of Process to Mr. McMaster.

(5) An Address to our connections and others, to accompany the Covenant, to Mr. Donnelly. These several subjects are required to be in readiness to present to the next meeting of Synod.

3. A Presbyterial report was received from the Southern Presbytery, which was read and accepted. The report recorded the fact of a protest by Rev. Thomas Donnelly against one decision of the Presbytery in the case of a certain John McNinch charged with a relapse into the crime of adultery, with the reasons of said protest. Mr. Donnelly appealed to the Synod, to whose jurisdiction the whole matter is now referred. The Synod refer this matter in complexo to a Committee consisting of Revs. McLeod, McMaster, Black, and Elder John Renfrew, with power to call for persons and papers, and report to Synod with all convenient speed.

4. The Synod again enjoin upon all the members who had been appointed to preach Presbyterial or Synodical discourses, that they shall without fail furnish the Committee of Revision, at as early a period as possible before the next meeting of Synod, with copies of said discourses for publication ; and that too whether the person appointed have had an opportunity of delivering them or not.

5. Mr. Black was requested forthwith to publish the

sermon on Ecclesiastical Communion which he had preached formerly at the opening of the Synod in Philadelphia, the number of copies left to his own prudence.

Messrs. Kell, Williams and Gill appeared and took their seats.

6. Mr. Samuel Robinson was called on to give Synod a relation of his movements, the state of religion in the bounds where he has been employed, the prospects in relation to Reformation principles, etc. His relation was satisfactory; and Synod determined that from the representations made to them by Mr. Robinson, he be granted permission to act at his own discretion in the city of Cincinnati for the space of one year from this time, he conforming in all his services to the laws and usages of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; but Mr. Robinson is directed at the expiration of that period to put himself under the direction of the Western Presbytery; and that said Presbytery return to this Court the petitions from Cincinnati formerly referred to them. The petitions were accordingly returned by the Western Presbytery.

7. Some inconveniency having arisen to some who had been invited to preach to those not in the communion of this Church, respecting the direction of the several parts of public worship, and complaints being made thereon. Synod Resolved, That in all ordinary cases, except among our own connections, no minister or preacher shall engage in the public services of religion unless by a written request, signed by one or more persons; and in no case unless he shall have the entire direction of the several parts of the worship.

8. The report of the Superintendents of the Theological Seminary, which had formerly been presented and referred, relative to the state of that institution, was called up. After much discussion the following substitute was adopted, Resolved, That the act suspending the act establishing the Theological Seminary be continued in operation until the next meeting of Synod; that in the meantime the officers of each congregation be directed to raise, in such manner as they shall judge most discreet, an annual sum for the treasury of that institution.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M.

3 o'clock, P.M.

The Synod met and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut supra.

1. The Committee appointed to enquire whether there be any causes of thanksgiving or fasting, reported that, in their opinion, there were causes of both, and presented drafts of these causes, which were adopted. The Court appointed the second Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving; and the second Thursday of February, 1819, as a day of fasting and humiliation to be observed by this Synod and all under its inspection.

2. The Committee relative to the Southern Presbytery and Rev. Thomas Donnelly's protest and appeal, made the following report to Synod: —

The Committee to whom was referred an appeal to Synod from a decision of the Southern Presbytery, met and had parties and documents before them. Upon examination the Committee are of the opinion that the charge of relapse into the crime of adultery against the member tried by the session of Mr. Donnelly's congregation, is not supported with proof sufficient for conviction. Nevertheless, as from the past conduct of the accused, and the presumptive testimony presented in the case, there is not only probable ground for suspecting some criminality, but there is a very general impression upon the public mind in the neighborhood of his residence that he is in fact guilty, and the Church must suffer from his bad fame if he is retained in its fellowship. The Committee recommend to Synod the following resolution: —

Resolved, That the session of Mr. Donnelly's congregation be directed to suspend indefinitely from all Church powers and privileges the accused person in question, and give public intimation to said suspension throughout the bounds of the Southern Presbytery, so far as the report has become public. Synod adopted this report.

3. The Committee on Missions made the following report: Your Committee have endeavored to give the subject assigned

them due consideration, and the result of their deliberation is that something ought to be done as soon as possible in relation to this great and important object. The present is the age of inquiry, of intellectual enterprize, and the missionary spirit. But good things are the most likely to be abused. For want of correct views of truth, moral order, and evangelical doctrine the missionary spirit is accompanied with delusion, enthusiasm and human inventions. It is time then that the friends of pure and unadulterated religion should bestir themselves. That those who long for the enlargement and stability of the Mediator's Kingdom should put to their hands, and use their utmost efforts to carry the message of salvation, the glad tidings of great joy, unto all people, as far as in their power. Your Committee would therefore recommend: —

(1) That a Committee be appointed who shall direct the course of such as may be appointed or chosen to visit destitute regions.

(2) That such Missionaries shall keep a record of all expenditures, and that these shall be refunded.

(3) That voluntary contributions shall be solicited to furnish means of supply, which shall be at the disposal of the Committee of Missions under the control of Synod.

(4) That the Missionaries who shall come within the bounds of any of our Presbyteries shall not act otherwise than under the direction of said Presbytery.

Adopted by Synod.

4. The Synod appoint their next meeting at Conococheague, at the house of Mr. John Thomson, on the second Tuesday of August, 1819. The Rev. James R. Willson is to open the Synod with a sermon on "The Guilt of Adam's first sin."

5. The Synod agree to have an interlocutory meeting tomorrow at 3 o'clock P.M.

Adjourned to meet tomorrow at 6 o'clock P.M.

6 o'clock P.M.

Synod met and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut antea.

1. Mr. Samuel Wylie, who had been referred to the Middle Presbytery to be taken under trials with a view to ordination, was introduced by Rev. John Black as an ordained minister. On motion he was invited to a seat as a member of Synod. He took his seat accordingly.

2. A report was received from the Middle Presbytery which was read and adopted.

3. Mr. Archibald Johnston was called on to report his movements and the fulfilment of his appointments. He gave a statement which was accepted.

4. Mr. Archibald Johnston is referred to the Northern Presbytery until the next meeting of Synod.

5. Mr. Samuel W. Crawford is referred to the Middle Presbytery until the next meeting of Synod.

6. Synod agree that a Committee be appointed to enquire into the expediency of establishing Foreign Missions. Revs. J. R. Willson and Dr. McLeod that Committee.

Adjourned to meet at Mr. John Thomson's, on the second Tuesday of August, 1819.

The Moderator concluded with prayer and singing.

(Signed)

Thomas Donnelly, Moderator.

John Black, Synod Clerk.