

## Session IX. — 1821.

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Philadelphia, Oct. 17, 1821.

The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church met according to adjournment, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Robert Lusk, from Isaiah 53:5, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

The service being finished, the Court adjourned till tomorrow at 9 o'clock A.M.

Thursday, Oct. 18, 1821.

Pursuant to adjournment Synod met and was called to order by Rev. Dr. S. B. Wylie, being moderator pro tem; the Moderator of last Synod, the Rev. John Cannon, being absent.

The Court proceeded to ascertain the members of the present Synod, when it appeared there were present from the —

Northern Presbytery.		
Ministers.	Elders.	Congregation.
Alexander McLeod	Andrew Gifford	New York.
James R. Willson	— — — —	Coldenham.
Gilbert McMaster	— — — —	Duanesburgh.
Samuel M. Willson	— — — —	Galway & Broad Albin.
Melancthon B. Williams	— — — —	Kortright.
James Milligan	— — — —	Ryegate.
Philadelphia Presbytery.		
Samuel B. Wylie	Robert Orr	Philadelphia.
John Gibson	— — — —	Baltimore.
Robert Lusk	John Renfrew	Conococheague.
Pittsburgh Presbytery.		
John Black	— — — —	Pittsburgh.
William Gibson	— — — —	Cannonsburgh.
Robert Gibson	— — — —	Little Beaver.
Western Presbytery.		
Samuel Wylie	— — — —	Bethel.

1. The Rev. John Gibson was called to the Moderator's chair, and Rev. John Black was continued Synod's Clerk.

2. The Rev. Samuel M. Willson was introduced by the Rev. Gilbert McMaster, as a minister ordained by the Northern Presbytery, and settled as pastor of the united congregations of Galway and Broad Albin. He was invited to a seat in Synod. He took his seat accordingly.

3. The Rev. Melancthon B. Williams was introduced by the Rev. Mr. Willson, as a minister ordained by the Northern Presbytery to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Kortright. He was invited to a seat in Synod, with which invitation he complied.

4. The Synod agree that the following amendments be made to the Rules, to be inserted between the 4<sup>th</sup>. and 5<sup>th</sup>. Rules, viz: There shall be six Standing Committees as soon as Synod is constituted and new members introduced; each of them to consist of two members to be nominated by the Moderator; but Synod may at any time increase the number of members in any of these Committees.

Standing Committees:

- I. A Committee for Unfinished Business.
- II. A Committee for Presbyterial Reports.
- III. A Committee for the Theological Seminary.
- IV. A Committee for the Signs of the Times.
- V. A Committee for Cases of Discipline.
- VI. A Committee for Foreign Correspondence.

The following members were appointed for these Committees, viz: —

1. For Unfinished Business, Revs. J. R. Willson and Samuel Wylie.
2. For Presbyterial Reports, Revs. Gilbert McMaster and Robert Lusk.
3. For Theological Seminary, Revs. John Black and James Milligan.
4. For Signs of the Times, Revs. Robert Gibson and S. M. Willson.
5. For Cases of Discipline, Rev. A. McLeod and elder Robert Orr.
6. For Foreign Correspondence, Revs. A. McLeod and S. B. Wylie.

The Committee to whom was referred the republication of the Testimony were called on to report. They reported that, for reasons which were sanctioned, they had never met on this business.

On motion it was agreed that the business of the above Committee be referred to the Committee on Unfinished Business.

The persons to whom were referred the various subjects of the Third Part of the Testimony were inquired at whether they were prepared to present to Synod the Essays severally appointed to them. It appearing that the majority of the members were not prepared, on motion, it was Resolved, That this business be referred to the Committee on Unfinished Business to report thereon.

On motion, Resolved, That the Committee respecting an Address to our sister Synods of Britain and Ireland be discharged, and that the disposal of this business be referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence.

On motion, Resolved, That such parts of the Minutes as relate to the Theological Seminary be referred to the Committee on the Theological Seminary.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M.

3 o'clock P.M., Eodem die et loco.

Synod met agreeable to adjournment. Same members ut supra.

1. A remonstrance against the act of Synod of 1819, in relation to the proclamation for marriage, etc., was received from Mr. James Miller of Kortright, N. Y., and read. It was referred to the Committee on Discipline to report thereon.

2. A petition was received and read from Mr. James Miller, near Xenia, Ohio, requesting an extract from the Minutes in relation to Rev. Samuel Robinson, the formation of a new Presbytery, etc., which was referred to the same Committee.

3. A paper was presented from a society in Lincoln County, Tennessee, containing a call upon ~~the Rev.~~ Mr. Hugh McMillan. Referred to the Committee on Presbyterial Reports.

4. A letter was received from Mr. James Willson, Kaskaskia, State of Illinois, praying for information respecting Deacons, etc. Referred to the Committee on Discipline.

5. A protest and appeal from the decision of the session of Coldenham, and ultimately from the decision of the Northern Presbytery, in a case in which he was con-

cerned, was presented to Synod from Mr. Francis Qua, craving their judicial cognizance on the premises, was read and referred to a select Committee consisting of Revs. Drs. Black and Wylie, and elder John Renfrew.

6. Presbyterian Reports were called for. None were in readiness to be presented except the report of the Western Presbytery, which was received, read, and referred to the Committee on Presbyterian Reports.

7. Receiving Presbyterian Reports was made the order of the day for tomorrow.

8. Rev. Samuel M. Willson craved to be discharged from being a member of the Committee on the Signs of the Times on account of indisposition. Granted, and Rev. J. R. Willson was put in his place.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock A.M. tomorrow.

Moderator concluded by prayer.

10 A.M., Friday, Oct. 19, 1821.

Agreeable to adjournment the Court met and was constituted by prayer. Same members ut antea.

The order of the day was the receiving of Presbyterian reports.

1. The Northern Presbytery presented a report, which was read and referred to the Committee on Presbyterian Reports.

2. A petition was received from seven members of the congregation of Kortright, praying for a repeal of the Act of 1819, respecting the proclamation of Marriage, etc. Read and referred to the Committee on Discipline.

3. The Committee of Discipline reported on the letter of Mr. James Willson, of Illinois, enjoining it on the Stated Clerk of this Synod to inform Mr. Willson "that it accords with the principles and practices of this Church to ordain congregational deacons as soon as the fiscal concerns of any church render it necessary; and that no connection with the laws, the officers, or the order of the state is prohibited by the Church except what truly involves compliance with immorality." The above reported was adopted by Synod.

4. The Committee on Presbyterial Reports, to which was referred the petitions from Lincoln Co., Tenn., and Todd Co., Ky., reported the following Resolutions: —

(1) That the said petition to Synod and call upon Mr. Hugh McMillan which it covers, be referred to the Philadelphia Presbytery, and that it be enjoined upon by said Presbytery to take order thereon forthwith.

(2) The Committee further recommend that the report of the Western Presbytery be accepted, and that the case of Rev. Samuel Robinson, as presented in said report, be referred to the Committee on Discipline ; and likewise that the part of the report respecting the organization of a branch of the Theological Seminary be referred to the Committee on the Theological Seminary to report thereon.

This report was accepted by Synod, and the papers delivered to the respective Committees accordingly.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M.

3 o'clock P.M. Eodem die et loco.

The Court met and was constituted. Same members ut supra.

1. A report was received from the Pittsburgh Presbytery which was read. This report states an accession of two members to that Presbytery since the last meeting of Synod; viz: the Rev. Robert Gibson, ordained Sept. 6, 1819, to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Little Beaver, Pennsylvania ; and the Rev. Charles B. McKee, ordained August 7, 1821, to the pastoral charge of a congregation in Chillicothe and its vicinity, in State of Ohio.

2. A report from the Committee on the Signs of the Times was received and read. It contained a statement of causes of fasting and humiliation, as also causes of thanksgiving. The causes of fasting were accepted and ordered to be printed.

On motion, Resolved, That the causes of thanksgiving be recommitted to the same Committee with a view to their enlargement, and being again presented to this Court when thus enlarged. The second Wednesday of December next, (or the next Thursday as might suit the several congregations) was appointed as a day of thanksgiving ; and the second Thursday of February,

1822, as a day of fasting and humiliation.

3. Rev. Dr. McLeod read an extract from a letter he had received from Rev. Prof. Andrew Symington, informing him that he had sent on a number of copies of a summary, etc., of the doctrines of the Scottish Testimony ; that the Scottish Synod would send to this Court a Synodical letter; that the judgment of the American Synod would be requested respecting this publication which was now in Overture.

The books having arrived, Dr. McLeod presented one to this Court in the name of the Scottish Synod.

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

Saturday, Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1821.

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

1. The special Committee appointed to consider the protest and appeal of Mr. Francis Qua, of Coldenham congregation, presented a report which was read and ordered to lie on the table until the Minutes of Coldenham session be considered.

2. The Committee on Unfinished Business presented a report on the Argumentative Part of the Testimony, which was read and made the order of the day for Monday forenoon.

3. The Committee on the Questions of Order and Discipline reported in part on the petition from Kortright, and the letter of Mr. James Miller from Bovina, in which they state that they are not aware that Synod have ever given directions about lining Psalms before they are sung, and they do not now think it proper to recommend to Synod any resolutions upon that subject ; and in relation to the subjects of the proclamation before Marriage, the Committee recommend to Synod the following resolution : That the Article in the Directory which respects the solemnization of marriage be reconsidered. The Synod accepted this report.

4. On motion the Synod resolved itself into a Committee of the whole for the consideration of this subject. Rev. Samuel Wylie was called to the chair. Three propositions were presented to the Committee for consideration.

I. To refer the times of publication of the banns of marriage to the sessions of the respective congregations.

II. The plan recommended by the old Directory enjoining three several Sabbaths.

III. Having the purpose advertized eight days previous in some public paper.

The first and second of these were negatived and the third withdrawn. The Committee reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

The Moderator having taken the chair, on motion the Court adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M.

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3 o'clock P.M.

The Court met and was constituted. Same members ut supra.

The Synod again went into a Committee of the Whole on the reconsideration of the fifth Chapter of the Directory.

1. Agreed that the caption of the Chapter on Marriage be amended by striking out the words "for occasional worship." Agreed.

2. Also in the same Chapter, Section 1, by striking out the words "it is" and the "period." Agreed.

3. And in Section 2, that for the words "Church members" the words "Those who marry" be substituted. Agreed.

The Committee then reported progress.

The Moderator then took the Chair, and, on motion, the Committee was discharged. The Synod then ratified these alterations.

4. The Synod agreed that there be a reconsideration of the whole Chapter on Marriage.

5. That a special Committee be appointed to report thereon on Monday afternoon.

6. Agreed to reconsider the fifth article of the Second Chapter of the Book of Discipline. The reconsideration to be referred to the same Committee. That Revs. McLeod and Black be that Committee. On motion, Dr. Wylie was added to the Committee. The Minutes of the Committee of the Whole to be delivered to this Committee. Adjourned till 10 o'clock Monday A.M.

Monday, Oct. 22, 1821.

The Court met agreeably to adjournment and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut antea.

1. The report of the Committee on Unfinished Business was called up. This report had recommended, in relation to the Argumentative Part of the Testimony, that "All the documents which had been presented to Synod, with those papers which are in readiness by other members, be referred to a Committee to consist of two members who shall, if possible, be prepared to report at the next meeting of Synod." To this recommendation the Synod agreed. The Moderator nominated Revs. Drs. McLeod and Wylie as that Committee. On putting the question to these gentlemen whether they would accept the appointment, they both hesitated for the present, and had time allowed them for consideration.

2. The Committee on the Cases of Order and Discipline reported: That they had attended to the case of Rev. Samuel Robinson. From all their inquiries they had not been able to discover anything which can be produced in evidence in the case except the report of the Western Presbytery, and of course they have nothing to recommend on that subject. Mr. Robinson having been deposed from the office of the holy ministry by one of our Presbyteries, and nothing occurring to shake the confidence of the Synod in said Court, the said sentence of deposition must be deemed valid. This report was accepted.

The Committee further report on the letter and petition of James Miller of Clark's Run, Ohio, that it contains nothing which properly comes within their province. The petitioner requests (1) a copy of a certain minute respecting the Rev. Samuel Robinson's ordination; (2) the formation of a new Presbytery in Ohio, or at least a Presbyterial visit to that place. The Committee recommend that the first item be referred to the Stated Clerk, and the second to the Committee on Presbyterial Reports and Records. This was adopted.

3. Resolved, That in due time before each meeting of Synod, a collection be taken up in all the congregations in order to defray the expenses of ministers and elders in attending Synod, and distributed in proportion to the distance they have to

travel in order to attend the meetings of this Court, provided that no mileage be allowed to any member residing within fifty miles of the place of meeting.

4. The referred report, or the Francis Qua paper, was called up. The minutes of the session of Coldenham were called for and read. After examining all the documents, the Synod affirm the decision of both the Northern Presbytery and Coldenham session.

5. The Synod agree that a number of copies of the causes of fasting, not exceeding five hundred, be printed forthwith.

6. The Committee on the Theological Seminary presented a report. Ordered to lie on the table till called for.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M.

3 o'clock P.M.

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

1. A report was received from the Philadelphia Presbytery. It was read and accepted.

2. The special Committee reported the following amendment on the fifth article of the Second section of the Book of Discipline, viz: Instead of "Lodges of Freemasons" substitute "especially from all entangling associations with ungodly men." This was adopted.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow.

10 o'clock, Tuesday, Oct. 23, 1821.

Synod met and was constituted by the Moderator. Same members ut supra.

1. The special Committee appointed on the Chapter on Marriage, presented the following amendment, viz: — "In order to prevent rash and unlawful connections, no minister shall solemnize marriage until he shall have evidence that the parties have caused their purpose to be duly published to all whom it may concern ; such publication shall be made in the town or congregation to which each of the parties belongs,

and for such a length of time as may be necessary to ascertain, to the satisfaction of the elders of the Church, that no lawful impediment to their union exists.”

The Synod ratified this amendment.

2. The Committee on Presbyterial Reports and Records reported as follows: That while it is desirable that Synod should dispose in due proportion of the services of the probationers under our jurisdiction, from a want of documents sufficient to put your Committee in possession of the state of the particular Presbyteries, it is recommended that the distribution of the labors of your probationers be left to the regulation which may be made by Presbyterial arrangement among the Presbyteries.

Upon the petition of James Miller of Clark’s Run, Ohio, for a division of the Pittsburgh Presbytery, and the organization of a new Presbytery within the bounds of its present jurisdiction, or for a Presbyterial visitation, your Committee report that it is deemed inexpedient at this time to form within the said bounds another Presbytery; and that of the propriety of a Presbyterial visitation to any of its particular congregations, said Presbytery is the proper judge.

In reference to the Southern Presbytery, now dissolved in consequence of the death of the Rev. John Reilly, it is further reported that measures be taken speedily for its reorganization. In order to this it is recommended that some one of your Presbyteries be enjoined to send one or more of its ministers to South Carolina to co-operate with the surviving member of the Southern Presbytery, in the ordination of such candidates for the ministry as may be found qualified in that region, and to aid in such other business as may be requisite for the restoration of that judicatory.

Upon the state of the several congregations under the jurisdiction of this Synod, your Committee deems it unnecessary to make any further remarks. Synod, by a reference to the particular reports of Presbyteries upon their Minutes,

will find the prospects of our Church such as to encourage exertion, and to give assurance of success under the gracious Providence of the King of Zion. The increase of those who labor in the vineyard of the Lord, the blessing of God accompanying their services, the general aspect of spiritual health throughout our Churches, must impress upon our minds a lesson of gratitude to the Supreme Giver of all good.

Although your Committee is not certain that the recommendation of the following resolution properly belongs to them, yet being assured of its importance for the preservation of order, venture to offer it to Synod for adoption, viz: —

Resolved, That any minister or probationer, duly certified, coming within the bounds of any Presbytery under the jurisdiction of this Synod in order to reside, may be employed in those public services to which he may be competent, until the first meeting of Presbytery next after his arrival; but if such minister or probationer omit to report himself within six months, or at said meeting, he may not be employed until he report himself and submit to Presbyterial direction. Adopted by Synod.

3. On motion, Resolved, That members of Freemason Lodges, shall not be admitted to the communion in the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

This motion having undergone an ample discussion, and every member of Synod having expressed his disapproval of Masonic Lodges, and it be ascertained that both the standards and practice of the Church had uniformly prohibited the admission of such persons into the communion of this Church, therefore,

Resolved, That such statute is altogether unnecessary, as the object contemplated by it has always been, and must always continue to be, acted upon by our societies and judicatories.

4. A reference from the Philadelphia Presbytery, together with certain documents, was received. Referred to the Committee on Order and Discipline to report in the afternoon.

5. A petition was presented to Synod by Mr. Samuel W. Crawford, licentiate, praying for further indulgence to remain in Philadelphia until the spring. The prayer of the petition was granted, and Mr. Crawford was delivered into the hands of the Philadelphia Presbytery.

Adjourned till 4 o'clock P.M.

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4 o'clock P.M.

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

1. Resolved, That the two acts in the Narrative of our Testimony respecting the swearing of oaths before magistrates, and sitting on juries, be left out of the Narrative in the republication of the Testimony, and that these acts be transcribed into the Statute Book, and together with other statutes in force, shall be in due time be published in the form of a Digest.

2. The Committee on Order and Discipline presented the following report on the reference from Philadelphia Presbytery: The Committee finally reported that they have considered the case referred to them by the Philadelphia Presbytery, carried up from the session of Conococheague, and that they find nothing requiring the interference of Synodical authority, except a question of order, upon the relative powers of the Moderator and members of session. Upon that question, without any special view of one case more than another, the Committee recommend to Synod the following resolution: — That the Philadelphia Presbytery be informed that the common order of society, and especially Presbyterian order, requires that the presiding officer of any society, and certainly the Moderator of any session, must put any question that comes regularly moved and seconded before him; and if, in the estimation of either the Moderator or any other member of session, there should be anything irregular in form or incorrect in principle in any such resolution, there is an ample remedy in the right of appeal to the superior judicatory from whatever decision may be so made. This report was accepted by Synod.

3. The report of the Committee on the Theological Seminary was received, read, and rejected, and the same Committee enjoined to prepare a report to be presented to Synod at tomorrow's sederunt.

4. On motion, the Rev. J. R. Willson was requested to give a narrative of his mission to the British Provinces on tomorrow.

5. The Clerk of Synod was authorized to furnish a folio Book, and employ a clerk under his inspection to write out a fair copy of the Minutes, and draw upon the Synod for the amount.

Adjourned till tomorrow at half past six o'clock A.M.

Wednesday, Oct. 24, 1821, 6:30 o'clock A.M.

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

1. On motion the act of appointment of Pittsburgh Presbytery to send a member to South Carolina, was repealed, and the following substituted in its room: —

Resolved, That Revs. John Cannon, Samuel Wylie, James R. Willson and Robert Lusk, or as many of these members as can go, be, and hereby are appointed a Committee to repair as speedily as possible to the bounds of the Southern Presbytery, and re-organize that Presbytery, and assist in doing whatever Presbyterial business may be required in that district.

2. The report of the Committee presented a report contemplating the republication of the Testimony and other documents, a chapter on Adoption, etc. The Synod accepted the report and agree to the following resolution, viz: —

3. Resolved, That a Committee of two be appointed who shall prepare a chapter on "Adoption" to be inserted in our Testimony on its republication, and likewise bring down the Narrative of the history of this period to this date, and present these documents to the next meeting of Synod. And further the same Committee shall publish as speedily as possible extracts of the Minutes

of the sessions of Synod held in Coldenham, Pittsburgh, Conococheague, and in this place. Revs. Black and Gibson were appointed that Committee.

4. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reported that it is, in their opinion, important, considering the critical condition in which the Church in the British Isles now stands, to hold with them a regular correspondence, and to give all the aid in the power of this Church to their brethren across the Atlantic, in maintaining unimpaired the testimony which they have so long and so honorably held. They accordingly recommend the following resolution: — viz:

(1) Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to address, in the name of this Synod, each of the Synods in the British Dominions.

(2) That the members of this Synod who have correspondents among the ministers of the Church of Scotland, be requested to examine the summary, etc., and write their remarks on the same to their correspondents. Synod accepted the report. Drs. McLeod and Wylie are appointed a Committee to address our sister Synods in Britain and Ireland.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock A.M.

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10 o'clock A.M.

Synod met and were called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut antea with the exception of Revs. Melancthon B. Williams and Samuel M. Willson who had leave of absence.

1. The Committee on the Theological Seminary presented a report recommending the following resolution, viz:

(1) That the Synod enjoin it on all their members, and the Church at large, to use all lawful exertions to resuscitate the Seminary, and in the meantime to endeavor to raise funds for this purpose.

(2) That the Presbyteries shall pay all possible attention to young men in their bounds, who have talents and piety, and a desire to devote themselves to the work of the gospel ministry.

(3) That the literary qualifications prescribed and required by the Theological Seminary, as far as practicable, shall still be required by the several Presbyteries from those young men who are recognized as students of divinity, and that strict attention shall be paid to all the injunctions of last Synod in relation to this subject. Adopted by Synod.

2. Dr. A. McLeod presented his consent to serve on the Committee for completing the third part of the Testimony in the following words: —

“Dr. McLeod returns thanks for his indulgence in regard to his appointment to the Committee for completing the third part of the Testimony, and now respectfully consents to serve on that Committee. He, however, requests of Synod that all the pieces already prepared be delivered to him, with a table of contents to each piece, composed by its author, and referring to the pages of his own manuscript. That Rev. J. R. Willson be added, and that both Dr. Wylie and he be directed to furnish Dr. McLeod with a schedule of the subjects proper for such a work, specifying the order of discussion, and the classis argumentorum under each topic. In such case Dr. McLeod consents to write out the whole work for the inspection of the Synod at its next meeting.” Synod accepted this consent.

3. The next meeting of Synod is appointed to be in Pittsburgh, on the first Tuesday of August, 1823, at 11 o'clock A.M., to be opened with a sermon on “Regeneration” by the Rev. John Gibson; and, he failing, by the Rev. Robert Gibson, as a substitute.

4. The thanks of Synod were returned to the Rev. Robert Lusk for his sermon, and he was requested to furnish the Committee of Revision with a copy, as soon as convenient. Mr. Lusk consented to this request.

The Synod, on motion, concluded its session for the present, and adjourned by prayer, and singing the 133d. Psalm.

(Signed)

John Gibson, Moderator.  
John Black, Synod Clerk.