

MANUAL
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



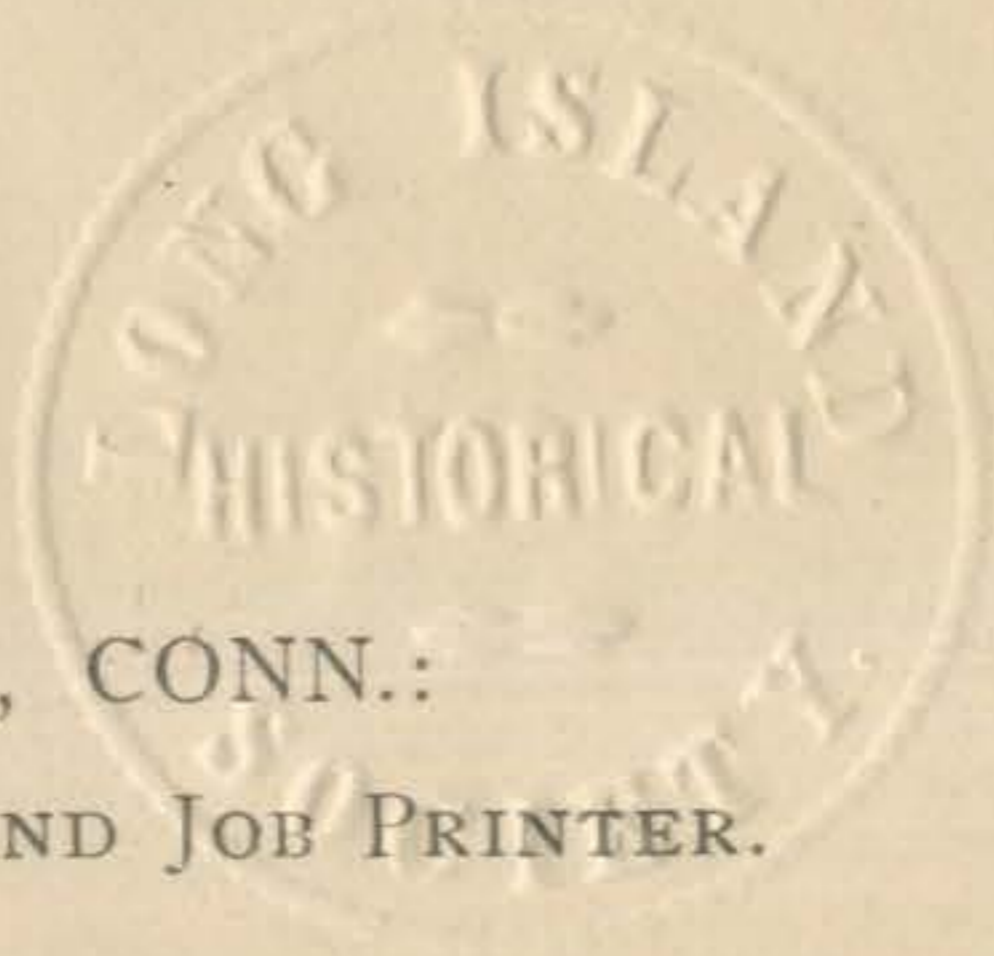
STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT.

MAY 1, 1894.

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MANUAL
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF
STONINGTON, CONN.

CONTAINING
THE ACT OF INCORPORATION, RULES OF
GOVERNMENT, ARTICLES OF FAITH,
COVENANT, HISTORICAL SKETCH.



NEW LONDON, CONN.:
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1894.

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OFFICERS.

PASTOR, REV. HENRY CLARKE.

CLERK, EDWARD E. BRADLEY.

TREASURER, GEORGE A. SLADE.

DEACONS.

FREDERICK D. CHESEBROUGH.

ERASTUS D. SMITH.

ALBERT L. GATES.

ALLEN C. SLADE.

ROBERT GALE.

CHURCH COMMITTEE.

ERASTUS D. SMITH.

HORACE N. PENDLETON.

GEORGE A. SLADE.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL,

ERASTUS D. SMITH.

SERVICES.

SUNDAY.

10.30 A. M. Preaching. Communion the last Sunday
of each month.

12 M. Sunday School.

6.30 P. M. Meeting of Y. P. S. C. E.

7.30 P. M. Preaching.

WEDNESDAY.

7.30 P. M. Prayer and Conference Meeting.

SATURDAY.

7.30 P. M. Prayer and Conference Meeting. Covenant
meeting on the evening before communion.

ACT OF INCORPORATION.

(ADOPTED BY THE CHURCH MAY 27, 1889.)

Joint Resolution No. 185, incorporating the First Baptist Church of Stonington Borough, Connecticut.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, GENERAL ASSEMBLY. }
January Session, A. D. 1889. }

Resolved by this Assembly:—

SECTION FIRST. That the present members of the First Baptist Church of Stonington Borough, and all others who shall hereafter become members, be, and they are hereby constituted and created a body politic and corporate by the name of the First Baptist Church of Stonington Borough, and by said name they and their successors shall be known and called, and shall have perpetual succession with power to sue and be sued, to plead and be impleaded, in all suits whatever, either at law or in equity, and to purchase, receive, hold, use, mortgage and convey any and all estate both real and personal, not exceeding in value the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) at any one time, and shall have, possess and enjoy all the rights, powers and privileges, and be subject to all the duties and obligations, possessed by and enjoined upon ecclesiastical societies by the laws of this State.

SECTION SECOND. The present officers of said association shall perform their respective duties as officers of said corporation until said corporation shall elect such officers as in its judgment may be necessary, not inconsistent with the laws of this State, or of the United

States, which election shall be held within sixty (60) days from the time this act is accepted by the members of said church.

SECTION THIRD. This resolution shall not take effect unless accepted by a majority vote of the members of said church present at a meeting duly warned and held for that purpose before the first day of June 1889, and it shall be the duty of the clerk of said church to cause a certified copy of the vote of acceptance to be lodged for record in the office of the Secretary of this State.



RULES OF GOVERNMENT.

(ADOPTED MARCH 28, 1892.)

NAME.

This organization shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Stonington Borough, Conn.

GOVERNMENT.

The church recognizes, as its sole authority on points of Doctrine, the Holy Scriptures.

In Government it is subordinate to no other organization. It is independent of all except the laws of Christ, as taught in the Word. Yet it will be guided in matters of importance by the accepted usages of the Baptist denomination, and will extend to and receive from churches of the same faith and order such council and assistance as shall be in accord with Christian love and fellowship.

MEMBERSHIP.

SECTION 1. Applicants for membership may be received by vote of this church on (*a*) a letter of dismissal from any other church of like faith and order; (*b*) immersion; (*c*) relation of Christian experience. Application for admission may be made at any stated meeting of the church, after compliance with the specified conditions.

SEC. 2. Applicants for admission by immersion shall first present themselves to the Advisory Committee, and, if approved, shall be by this Committee recommended to the church. They shall then make public profession of their faith to the church.

SEC. 3. Applicants for admission by the relation of Christian experience shall likewise present themselves before the Advisory Committee. They shall give satisfactory evidence of their conversion and immersion, and if recommended by the Committee, shall give public evidence to the church of the same facts.

DISMISSION.

SEC. 1. A letter of dismission may be granted by vote of the church to any member in good standing wishing to unite with another church of like faith and order. The person to whom the letter is granted shall be considered a member of this church until official notice is received of reception into the church to whose fellowship the person is recommended.

SEC. 2. General letters of dismission shall not be granted. The applicant must specify the church into whose membership entrance is sought.

SEC. 3. No letter of dismission shall be considered valid for a longer period than six months.

SEC. 4. Any person desiring to unite, on account of change of views, with a church of different faith and order, may be furnished, at the option of the church, with a certificate of Christian character. The person receiving this letter shall be entered in the list of dismissed members, with proper explanation. Such certificates shall, in no case, be considered as letters of dismission to the fellowship of churches of other denominations.

DISCIPLINE.

SEC. 1. No charge against any member shall be presented to the church with a view to discipline, until it has first been presented to the Advisory Committee.

SEC. 2. When such a charge has been lodged with the Committee, the Committee shall at once proceed to

investigate it. If the charge is found to be groundless, or if the cause of offence is removed, no report shall be made to the church.

SEC. 3. In every case where such a charge is made the Committee shall, when possible, invite the accused to meet them and answer to the charge. Refusal to accept this invitation, when possible to accept, shall be considered just cause for reporting the case for the action of the church.

SEC. 4. The Advisory Committee may make such recommendations to the church in matters of discipline as they may deem wise, may appoint a committee from their own number to confer with the delinquent member, or may take any other preparatory action considered by them advisable.

SEC. 5. Excluded members may be restored to fellowship upon confession of their errors, and by giving satisfactory evidence of repentance.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES.

SEC. 1. The officers and committees of this church shall consist of a Pastor, five Deacons, a Clerk, a Treasurer, a Church Committee of three members, and an Advisory Committee.

SEC. 2. The Pastor shall preach the gospel, administer the ordinances, exercise a general watchcare over the church, and preside at all stated and business meetings of the church at which he is present.

SEC. 3. The Deacons shall assist in the administration of the ordinances, shall take charge of the Poor Fund, and shall, as much as lies in their power, assist the Pastor in his work. A report of all money received and disbursed in connection with the Poor Fund shall be made at the annual meeting.

SEC. 4. The Clerk shall have charge of all records, shall keep a record of the action of the church, also a record of the membership, and shall write all church letters. He shall call any business meeting to order, in the absence of the Pastor. He shall also produce the records of the church for examination, when requested to do so by any set of church officers, or by ten of the members.

SEC. 5. The Treasurer shall receive the funds of the church, shall deposit them only in the name of the church, and shall disburse them only upon order from the Church Committee. He shall present an itemized report for the preceding year at the annual business meeting of the church. Upon a written request from the Church Committee he shall give a statement of the financial condition of the church, at any properly called special meeting.

SEC. 6. The Church Committee shall have charge of all church property, shall control the church finances, and shall, in general, be the administrators of the temporal interests of the church. They shall present at the annual meeting an itemized report of expenditure during the year, and of other business transacted in the interest of the church.

SEC. 7. The Advisory Committee shall consist of the Pastor, Deacons, and one other member who shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting. It shall be their duty to meet the specified candidates for church membership, to take anticipatory action in cases of discipline, and to prepare other matters of business not pertaining to other officers or committees.

ELECTIONS.

SEC. 1. The Pastor shall be called by at least a three-fourths vote of the members of the church present at any meeting regularly called for this purpose.

SEC. 2. Any vacancy in the Board of Deacons shall be filled at the first Covenant meeting, for which notice of one week can be given after the vacancy occurs. They shall hold office as long as they are members of the church, or until they resign.

SEC. 3. The Clerk, Treasurer, Church Committee, and one member of the Advisory Committee shall be elected at the regular annual meeting, and their term of office shall be from one annual meeting to another. In case of necessity, a Clerk, Treasurer, or members of the Church Committee may be elected to fill out an unexpired term at any special business meeting of the church.

SEC. 4. All these elections shall be by ballot.

OTHER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES.

1. *A Chorister.* It shall be his duty to direct the music for the public services of the church, and, in connection with the Musical Committee, to have general charge of matters relating to church music.

2. *A Sexton,* whose duty it shall be, under direction of the Church Committee, to keep in order the rooms for worship, attend to the heating and lighting, and to perform other services necessary to the care of the church property.

3. *A Musical Committee* of three, who shall, in conjunction with the Chorister, attend to any business relating to the music of the church. They shall, however, draw no money from the church treasury, unless permission is granted by the church.

4. *A Baptism Committee,* consisting of the Deacons and two female members. It shall be their business to assist the pastor and candidates at baptism, and to care for the baptismal robes.

5. These officers and committees shall be elected at the annual business meeting of the church.

BUSINESS MEETINGS.

SEC. 1. The annual meeting shall be held on the first Monday evening in April, for the choice of officers and committees, to hear the reports of the same, as heretofore specified, and to transact any other essential business.

SEC. 2. Special meetings for the transaction of business may be called at the option of the Church Committee, or by a written call signed by not less than ten members. Such meetings shall require public notice of not less than five (5) days.

SEC. 3. It shall be the privilege of every member of the church in good standing to vote on all questions at issue.

SEC. 4. Seven adult members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a less number may adjourn.

CALENDAR.

SEC. 1. The church year shall begin with April first.

SEC. 2. The sale of pews, assignment of sittings, or reception of pledges, if the seats are free, shall take place in the latter part of March, at the option of the Church Committee.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

The stated services of the church, subject to change from time to time if deemed advisable by the Pastor or church, shall be :

(1.) Preaching, or some public religious service, on each Sunday morning and evening.

(2.) Prayer meeting on one or more evenings of the week other than Sunday evening.

(3.) Celebration of the Lord's Supper on one Sunday of each month.

(4.) Covenant meeting of the church on the evening of the last church prayer meeting before the regular celebration of the Lord's Supper.

ALTERATION.

These Rules of Government may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any business meeting, provided that notice has been given at a business meeting, held at least ten days before, of an intention to propose such alteration or amendment.



ARTICLES OF FAITH.

I. THE SCRIPTURES.

We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction;¹ that it has God for its author, salvation for its end,² and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter;³ that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us;⁴ and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union,⁵ and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.⁶

¹ II Tim. iii., 16, 17; II Peter i., 21; II Sam. xxiii., 2; Acts i., 16; iii., 21; John x., 35; Luke xvi., 29-31; Ps. cxix., 111; Romans iii., 1, 2.

² II Tim. iii., 15; I Peter i., 10-12; Acts xi., 14; Romans i., 16; Mark xvi., 16; John v., 34-39.

³ Prov. xxx., 5, 6; John xvii., 17; Rev. xxii., 18, 19; Rom. iii., 4.

⁴ Romans ii., 12; John xii., 47, 48; I Cor. iv., 3, 4; Luke x., 10-16; xii., 47-48.

⁵ Phil. iii., 16; Ephes. iv., 3-6; Phil. ii., 1, 2; I Cor. i., 10; I Peter iv., 11.

⁶ I John iv., 1; Isa. vii., 20; I Thes. v., 21; II Cor. xiii., 5; Acts xvii., 11; I John iv., 6; Jude, 3d verse; Eph. vi., 17; Ps. cxix. 59, 60; Phil. i., 9-11.

II. THE TRUE GOD.

That there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth;¹ inexpressibly glorious in holiness;² worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love;³ revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;⁴ equal in every divine perfection,⁵ and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.⁶

- ¹ Psalm lxxxiii., 18; Heb. iii., 4; Rom. i., 20; Jer. x., 10.
² Exod. xv., 11; Isa. vi., 3; I Peter i., 15, 16; Rev. iv., 6-8.
³ Mark xii., 30; Rev. iv., 11; Matt. x., 37; Jer. ii., 12, 13.
⁴ Matt. xxviii., 19; John xv., 26; I Cor. xii., 4-6; I John v., 7.
⁵ John x., 30; v., 17; xiv., 23; Acts v., 3, 4; I Cor. iii., 10, 11.
⁶ Eph. ii., 18; II Cor. ii., 14; Rev. i., 4, 5.

III. THE FALL OF MAN.

That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his maker;¹ but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state;² in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners,³ not by constraint but choice,⁴ being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin,⁵ without defence or excuse.⁶

¹ Gen. i., 27, 31; Eccl. vii., 29; Acts xvii., 20; Gen. ii., 16.

² Gen. iii., 6-24; Rom. v., 12.

³ Rom. v., 19; John iii., 6; Ps. li., 5; Rom. v., 15-19; viii., 7.

⁴ Isa. liii., 6; Gen. vi., 12; Rom. iii., 9-18.

⁵ Eph. ii., 1-3; Rom. i., 18, 32; Gal. iii., 10; Matt. xxv., 41; Rev. xx., 15.

⁶ Ezek. xviii., 19, 20; Rom. i., 20; iii., 19; Gal. iii., 22.

IV. THE WAY OF SALVATION.

That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace;¹ through the Mediatorial Offices of the Son of God,² who took upon him our nature, yet without sin;³ honored the law by his personal obedience,⁴ and made atonement for our sins by his death;⁵ being risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven;⁶ and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour.⁷

¹ Eph. ii., 5; Matt. xviii., 11; I John iv., 10; I Cor. iii., 5-7; Acts xv., 11.

² John iii., 16; i., 1-14; Heb. iv., 14; xii., 24.

³ Phil. ii., 6, 7; Heb. ii., 9, 14; II Cor. viii., 9.

⁴ Isa. xlii., 21; Phil. ii., 8; Gal. iv., 4, 5; Rom. iii., 21.

⁵ Isa. liii., 4; Matt. xx., 28; Rom. iv., 25; iii., 21-26; I John iv., 10; ii., 2; I Cor. xv., 1-3; Heb. ix., 13-15.

⁶ Heb. i., 8; i., 3; viii., 3; Col. iii., 1-4.

⁷ Heb. vii., 25; Col. ii., 9; Heb. ii., 18; Heb. vii., 26; Psalm lxxxix, 19; xlv.

V. JUSTIFICATION.

That the great Gospel blessing which Christ of his fullness¹ bestows on such as believe in Him, is Justification;² that Justification consists in the pardon of sin³ and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness;⁴ that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done,⁵ but solely through His own redemption and righteousness;⁶ that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.⁷

¹ John i., 16; Eph. iii., 8.

² Acts xiii., 39; Isa. liii., 11; Rom. viii., 1.

³ Rom. v., 9; Zech. xiii., 1; Matt. ix., 6; Acts x., 43.

⁴ Rom. v., 17; Titus iii., 5, 6; I Peter iii., 7; I John ii., 25; Rom. v., 21.

⁵ Rom. iv., 4, 5; v., 21; vi., 23; Phil. iii., 7-9.

⁶ Rom. v., 19; iii., 24-26; I John ii., 12.

⁷ Rom. v., 1, 2, 3, 11; I Cor. i., 30; Matt. vi., 36; I Tim. iv., 8.

VI. THE FREENESS OF SALVATION.

That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel;¹ that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith;² and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ;³ which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.⁴

¹ Rev. xxii., 17; Isa. lv., 1; Luke xiv., 17.

² Rom. xvi., 25, 26; Mark i., 15; Rom. i., 15, 17.

³ John v., 40; Matt. xxiii., 37; Rom. ix., 32; Prov. i., 24; Acts xiii., 46.

⁴ John iii., 19; Matt. xi., 20; Luke xix., 27; II Thess. i., 8.

VII. GRACE IN REGENERATION.

That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again;¹ that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind;² and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation,³ by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel;⁴ and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.⁵

¹ John iii., 3, 7; Rev. xxi., 27.

² II Cor. v., 20; Ezek. xxxvi., 26; Deut. xxx., 6; Rom. ii., 28, 29; v., 5; I John iv., 7.

³ John iii., 8; i., 13; James i., 16-18; I Cor. i., 30; Phil. ii., 13.

⁴ I Peter i., 22-25; I John v., 1; Eph. iv., 20-24; Col. iii., 9-11.

⁵ Eph. v., 9; Rom. viii., 9; Gal. v., 16-23. Eph. iii., 14-21.

VIII. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE.

That Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners;¹ that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end;² that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable;³ that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy;⁴ that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree;⁵ that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the gospel;⁶ is the foundation of Christian assurance;⁷ and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.⁸

¹ II Tim. i., 8, 9; Eph. i., 3-14; I Peter i., 1, 2; Rom. xi., 5, 6; John xv., 16; I John iv., 19; Hos. xii., 9.

² II Thes. ii., 13, 14; Acts xiii., 48; John x., 16; Matt. xx., 16; Acts xv., 14.

³ Exod. xxxiii., 18, 19; Matt. xx., 15; Eph. i., 11; Rom. ix., 23, 24; Jer. xxxi., 3; Rom. xi., 28, 29; James i., 17, 18; II Tim. ii., 9; Rom. xi., 32-36.

⁴ I Cor. iv., 7; i., 26-31; Rom. iii., 27; iv., 16; Col. iii., 12; I Cor. iii., 5-7; xv., 10; I Peter v., 10; Acts i., 24; I Thes. ii., 13; I Peter ii., 9; Luke xviii., 7; John xv., 16; Eph. i., 16; I Thes. ii., 12.

⁵ II Tim. ii., 10; I Cor. ix., 22; Rom. viii., 28-30; John vi., 37-40; II Peter i., 10.

⁶ I Thes. i., 4-10.

⁷ Rom. viii., 28-39; Isaiah xlii., 16; Rom. xi., 29.

⁸ II Peter i., 10; Phil. iii., 12; Heb. vi., 11.

IX. THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

That such only are real believers as endure unto the end;¹ that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from mere professors;² that a special Providence watches over their welfare;³ and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.⁴

¹ John viii., 31; I John ii., 27, 28; iii., 9; v., 18.

² I John ii., 19; John xiii., 18; Matt. xiii., 20, 21; John vi., 66-69.

³ Rom. viii., 28; Matt. vi., 30-33; Jer. xxxii., 40; Ps. cxxi., 3; xci., 11, 12.

⁴ Phil. i., 6; ii., 12, 13; Jude 24, 25; II Kings vi., 16; Heb. i., 14; xiii., 5; I John iv., 4; John x, 27-30; xi., 25, 26.

X. HARMONY OF THE LAW AND GOSPEL.

That the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government;¹ that it is holy, just, and good;² and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfil its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin;³ to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.⁴

¹ Rom. iii., 21; Matt. v., 17; Luke xvi., 17; Rom. iii., 20; iv., 15.

² Rom. vii., 12; vii., 7, 14, 22; Gal. iii., 21; Ps. cxix.

³ Rom. viii., 7, 8; Josh. xxiv., 19; Jer. xiii., 23; John vi., 44; v., 44.

⁴ Rom. viii., 2-4; x., 4; I Tim. i., 5; Heb. viii., 10; Jude 20, 21; Heb. xii., 14.

XI. A GOSPEL CHURCH.

That a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers,¹ associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel;² observing the ordinances of Christ;³ governed by his laws;⁴ and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word;⁵ that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons,⁶ whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

¹ I Cor. i., 1-13; Matt. xviii., 17; Acts v., 11; viii., 1; xi., 26; I Cor. iv., 17; xiv., 23; III John 9; I Tim. iii., 5.

² Acts ii., 41, 42; II Cor. viii., 5; Acts ii., 47; I Cor. v., 12, 13.

³ I Cor. xi., 2; II Thess. iii., 6; Rom. xvi., 17-20; I Cor. xi., 23; Matt. xviii., 15-20; I Cor. 5 & II Cor. 2 & 7; I Cor. iv., 17.

⁴ Matt. xxviii., 20; John xiv., 15; xv., 12; I John iv., 21; John xiv., 21; I Thess. iv., 2; II John 6; Gal. vi., 2; all the Epistles.

⁵ Eph. iv., 7; I Cor. xiv., 12; Phil. i., 27.

⁶ Phil. i., 1; Acts xiv., 23; xv., 22; I Tim. iii., Titus. i.

XII. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water,¹ in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit;² to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its purifying power;³ that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper,⁴ in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ;⁵ preceded always by solemn self-examination.⁶

¹ Acts viii., 36-39; Matt. iii., 5, 6; John iii., 22, 23; iv., 1, 2; Matt. xxviii., 19; Mark xvi., 16; Acts ii., 38; viii., 12; xvi., 32-34; xviii., 8.

² Matt. xxviii., 19; Acts x., 47, 48; Gal. iii., 27, 28.

³ Rom. vi., 1-14; Col. ii., 12; I Pet. iii., 20, 21; Acts xxii., 16.

⁴ Acts ii., 41, 42; Matt. xxviii., 19, 20; Acts, and Epistles.

⁵ I Cor. xi., 26; Matt. xxvi., 26-29; Mark xiv., 22-25; Luke xxii., 14-21.

⁶ I Cor. xi., 28; I Cor. v. 7, 8; x., 3-32; xi., 17-32; John vi., 26-71.

XIII. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

That the first day of the week is the Lord's-Day, or Christian Sabbath;¹ and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes;² by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations;³ by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private⁴ and public;⁵ and by preparation for that rest⁶ which remaineth for the people of God.

¹ Acts xx., 7; Gen. ii., 3; Col. ii., 16, 17; Mark ii., 27; John xx., 19; I Cor. xvi., 1, 2.

² Exod. xx., 8; Rev. i., 10; Ps. cxviii., 24.

³ Isa. lviii., 13, 14; lvi., 2-8.

⁴ Ps. cxviii., 15.

⁵ Heb. x, 24, 25; Acts xi., 26; xiii., 44; Lev. xix., 30; Ezek. xlvi., 3; Luke iv., 16; Acts xvii., 2, 3; Ps. xxvi., 8; lxxxvii., 2.

⁶ Heb. iv., 3-11.

XIV. CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society;¹ and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed,² except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ,³ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.⁴

¹ Rom. xiii., 1-7; Deut. xvi., 18; II Sam. xxiii., 3; Exod. xviii., 23; Jer. xxx., 21.

² Matt. xxii., 21; Titus iii., 1; I Peter ii., 13; I Tim. ii., 1-8.

³ Acts v., 29; Matt. x., 28; Dan. iii., 15-18; vi., 7-10; Acts iv., 18-20,

⁴ Matt. xxiii., 10; Rom. xiv., 4; Rev. xix., 16; Ps. lxxii., 11; Ps. ii; Rom. xiv., 9-13.

XV. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED.

That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked;¹ that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem;² while all such as continue in impeni-

tence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse;³ and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.⁴

¹ Mal. iii., 18; Isa. v., 20; Gen. xviii., 23; Jer. xv., 19; Acts x., 34, 35; Rom. vi., 16.

² Rom. i., 17; vi., 18; I John ii., 29; iii., 7; Rom. vi., 18, 22; I Cor. xi., 32; Prov. xi., 31; I Peter iv., 17, 18.

³ I John v., 19; Gal. iii., 10; John iii., 36; Isa. lvi., 21; Ps. x., 4; Isa. lv., 6, 7.

⁴ Prov. xiv., 32; Luke xvi., 25; John viii., 21-24; Prov. x., 24; Luke xii., 4, 5; ix., 23-26; John xii., 25, 26; Eccl. iii., 17; Matt. vii., 13, 14.

XVI. THE WORLD TO COME.

That the end of this world is approaching;¹ that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven,² and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution;³ that a solemn separation will then take place;⁴ that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy;⁵ and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.⁶

¹ I Peter iv., 7; I Cor. vii., 29-31; Heb. i., 10-12; Matt. xxiv., 35; I John ii., 17; Matt. xxviii., 20; xiii., 39, 49; II Peter iii., 3-13.

² Acts i., 11; Rev. i., 7; Heb. ix., 28; Acts iii., 21; I Thess. iv., 13-18; v., 1-11.

³ Acts xxiv., 15; I Cor. xv., 12-59; Luke xiv., 14; Dan. xii., 2; John v., 28, 29; vi., 40; xi., 25, 26; II Tim. i., 10; Acts x., 42.

⁴ Matt. xiii., 49, 37-43; xxiv., 30, 31; xxv., 27-33.

⁵ Matt. xxv., 35-41; Rev. xxii., 11; I Cor. vi., 9, 10; Mark ix., 43-48; II Peter ii., 9, 10; Jude 7; Phil. iii., 19; Rom. vi., 22; II Cor. v., 10, 11; John iv., 36; II Cor. iv., 18.

⁶ Rom. iii., 5, 6; II Thess. i., 6-12; Heb. vi., 1, 2; I Cor. iv., 5; Acts xvii., 31; Rom. ii., 2-16; Rev. xx., 11, 12; I John ii., 8; iv., 17.

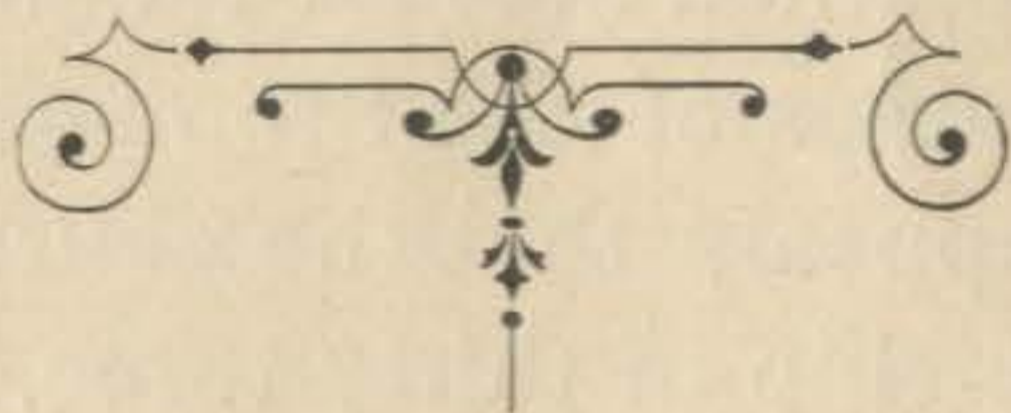
SEEING THEN THAT ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE DISSOLVED, WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT YE TO BE IN ALL HOLY CONVERSATION AND GODLINESS, LOOKING FOR AND HASTING UNTO THE COMING OF THE DAY OF GOD. II PETER III., 11, 12.

COVENANT.

Having found favor in the eyes of Almighty God, and, as we trust, obtained the saving knowledge of him in his divine character, through his dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, in convincing us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and having united our hearts to himself, by giving us power to believe in him; and, as with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; so we, being taught and inclined by the Word and Spirit of God, to own his cause, and profess his name and religion publicly :—

Therefore do, in the most solemn manner, before God, angels, and men, enter into covenant with Almighty God — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — by giving up ourselves with all we have and are, to him, with all our gifts and faculties, to be improved for his glory; covenanting and promising, by his grace assisting, to be for him and for none other; to serve and obey him in all his commandments and institutions, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures of truth; acknowledging with gratitude the sovereign riches of his grace in distinguishing us from the rest of mankind that are yet left in ignorance, and under the power and dominion of sin; and as our hearts are drawn and united to this people and church, we do most freely, fully and voluntarily give up ourselves to be under the government of the church, to be watched over and admonished and disciplined by the church; to be taught and instructed by it; covenanting and promising to walk with them and to watch over them, for their godly edifying, and not for

their halting; promising before God to attend on all the duties of religion both public and private, as God shall manifest to us by his word and Spirit, and to renounce the devil and his ways, and all inordinate love and affection to the sinful pleasures, fashions and delights of the world; and also to watch and guard against the sinful inclinations of the flesh, and to endeavor to live soberly, righteously and godly, in the present evil world, looking for the glorious hope, and appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; whose grace and assistance we implore to enable us to keep this covenant. Amen and Amen.



HISTORICAL SKETCH.

(TAKEN MAINLY FROM A PAPER READ BY REV. GEORGE H. MINOR, AT THE
DEDICATION OF THE NEW CHURCH BUILDING, OCTOBER 29, 1890.)

The Baptist Church on Long Point, as Stonington Borough was then called, breathed the first breath of church life on the twenty-second day of April, 1775.

There were present at the birth of this church some twenty or thirty delegates from the surrounding towns. No one knows positively who these delegates were, nor is there any record of those who organized themselves into a church. No distinct and separate records of the church appear till ten years later. This period of ten years embraces the American revolution. Doubtless the church was compelled to suspend for a time regular public services. But with the return of peace in 1785, the scattered members renewed the order of church life and public worship, when the first record appears. However, from the minutes of the Stonington Association in the year 1781, it appears that the church on Long Point reported a membership of thirty-three.

That faithful band of Christians met here and there, now in private houses, now in the old school house, and in an upper hall near the corner of Grand and Water streets. Here they prayed and exhorted one another to fidelity to truth and to God.

Isaac Backus, the early Baptist historian, was a member of the Association, and in his history he gives us the fact that the church was organized in April, 1775, and that John Rathbun was their first pastor. Most of them must have come out of the church of the standing order:

separating themselves from the church into which they were born. They had honest convictions of truth, and declared them in the midst of obloquy and social ostracism.

At the close of the war Mr. Sands Niles, the clerk of the church, made the first record which is preserved, dated January 29, 1785. This is the record:

“The church on Long Point called a meeting legally warned to act upon the following: ‘Whether frolicking such as fiddling and dancing, and for church members, heads of families, to suffer, or consent, or forward their children to go to them, was consistent with the religion of Jesus.’ The church answered by vote, ‘It is inconsistent.’”

Mr. Niles, the clerk, himself aggrieved, proceeded to prefer charges against brother Wait Rathbun and William Fellows, because they had not restrained their children from attending one of those “sinful and carnal frolicks” on the night of the 9th instant, whereupon these brethren were called up to confess their wrong, which they proceeded to do, and promised to do better in future.

Mr. John Rathbun was chosen as their first pastor. He had been a leader among them, or a lay-preacher and licentiate. He lived here, built and occupied the dwelling house in which afterwards Dr. William Hyde, senior, lived and died. He served them for four years, then removed to the Baptist church in Ashford, and was ordained March 15, 1781. He was a man of sterling character, and of no mean abilities as a preacher for those days.

After Mr. Rathbun’s removal Elder Benson from Rhode Island came and took the pastoral care and remained three years. He accomplished little more than to keep them together by preaching. At the close of the war, in 1785, the church was in a low and languishing condition and a part of the time without a pastor, often without preaching, and perhaps without regular services.

But in 1784 the church called to ordination and pastorate Valentine Wightman Rathbun, the son of their first minister, John Rathbun. After nearly two years had passed, he required them to come together again and give expression to their feelings, which they did, and on the 9th day of May, 1787, he consented, and was taken from the ranks of the laymen and ordained as pastor of the church by a council.

His ministrations mark a new departure. There was more intelligent counsel, more vigorous action, and more aggressive work. In the pastor's own handwriting, cleanly and beautiful, the records of the church are kept.

Valentine Wightman Rathbun was a man of sterling common sense and practical wisdom, in fact the whole family of Rathbuns was distinguished for their enterprise and character. He remained pastor of the church for eleven years, until 1799, when he removed to the pastorate of the Baptist church in Bridgewater, Mass., where he died October 5, 1812.

During his pastorate here the first meeting house was erected on the site where now stands the old church of ever blessed memories, sometime between 1787 and 1793. The land was given by Mr. Thomas Robinson, a member of the church. Joshua Swan and Joseph Palmer were the moving spirits in the building of that first house, of plain Puritan style of architecture, a box-like structure about forty feet square, with low pews and deep slanting galleries, and a long pulpit in the north, and wide double doors on the south, with a tower on the outside of the building. It is a fact worthy of mention that Mr. Swan became so involved financially in that enterprise that he was obliged to sell his own house to meet his liabilities. He owned three-fourths of the house, and sold or rented the pews as best he could. That old house was witness to many glorious revivals when the Spirit of God was

manifest in great power. On the pinnacle of the old church is the rod and ball which graced the first meeting house.

The fourth in the order of pastors was Elder William Gardner, a good man and a persuasive preacher, and his ministry was fruitful in enlarging and strengthening the church. During his ministry there was a powerful revival. But after three years of faithful service a derangement of mind increased to insanity, and he came to his sad and untimely end by suicide. This was a sad blow to the church.

Then came Thomas Spooner from Rhode Island and preached one year, when because of occasional intemperance which occasioned scandal, he was compelled to retire from the pastorate. Then for five succeeding years the records are deficient. But the church kept up worship, and on communion Sabbaths were supplied by neighboring pastors.

Deacon Elnathan Fellows, a man of blessed memory, and Sands Niles were men competent to conduct public worship acceptably. In fact Deacon Fellows was a superior man of his time. For years he cared for the church, its worship and its discipline, and he was adequate to its demands; genial, pious, gentle, loving and lovable, respected by all. Even the rough boys on the streets vied with each other to honor him. He was a born deacon, and the service which he and his excellent wife rendered to this church can never be forgotten. At the age of eighty-five years, after serving as deacon for thirty-five years, he fell on sleep January 31, 1837.

On May 30, 1810, this church probably did its best day's work in its whole history to that date. It called to the pastorate and to ordination a man well-remembered by many of you now living, Elihu Chesebrough.

Though eighty years have come and gone since that council convened, such names are still fragrant as Elder Peleg Randall, First North Stonington, Jedediah Randall and Asher Miner, Second North Stonington, John Gow Wightman, First Groton, Samuel West, New London, Asa Wilcox, Lyme. Mr. Wilcox preached the sermon, a man dignified in his bearing, of noble physique, and open, intellectual cast of countenance, a gentleman of the old school. Elder Wightman gave the charge, a rough stone out of the mountain, massive in thought, rude in outline, blunt in speech, and dogmatic in the extreme. Asher Miner, as usual, sung the prayer, intoning it in his own inimitable style, while the tears at his bidding flowed down his ruddy cheeks like the waters of Lodore.

At the time when this young man, Elihu Chesebrough assumed the pastorate, the church had been in existence thirty-five years. For the previous twenty years it had done little more than hold its own. It was financially weak. It was made up of the laboring class, who found their chief employment in the uncertain work of fishing, and, like the early fisherman of Galilee, they were poor, their numbers few, their social standing nothing, and yet they did not despair; for they relied upon truth and God for success. Under these conditions, in the year 1810, Elihu Chesebrough took up the work as pastor. By birth he belonged to the Congregational order, but, when converted, new light came. His educational advantages had been few, only such as the common school of that day afforded. He had neither readiness of speech nor smoothness of utterance, but when his soul was on fire he spoke with unction and power, which made sinners tremble and saints rejoice. Six days in the week he labored on the farm and brought to the Sabbath services an exhausted body, but always a good soul and heart. The church did

little or nothing for his support. During his twenty years ministry the church had a slow but healthy growth. In 1811 the number of members was sixty-five, and that year they had a revival of extraordinary power. It is recorded that in February of that year, while they were gathered together for Divine worship, frequently some cried out during the service for the Lord Jesus to have mercy on them, and besought the Christians to pray for them.

In 1814 they sent a letter to the Association, but stated they could send no delegates on account of the late attack by the British upon the borough, and they must stay at home to take care of females. In 1823, after Elder Chesebrough had preached to them continuously for thirteen years, Rev. Gideon B. Perry came on a visit to this borough from Brookfield, N. Y., and preached. His popularity was unbounded. He had pleasing manners, was free in his social relations, and was a born orator. He had a fine imagination, a musical voice and melting moods and tones. He carried everything by storm. The result was a revival which more than doubled the membership of the church, and he was called to the joint pastorate of the church with Elder Chesebrough and remained nearly three years.

During the three years of this joint pastorate the church not only increased by the baptism of seventy, making the aggregate one hundred and fifty, but it gained a popularity which drew to it the young, and the Sabbath school increased and furnished material for the future growth of the church. Mr. Perry afterwards entered the Episcopal church, and in that communion he lived and died.

In December, 1826, the church extended a unanimous call to Rev. Jabez S. Swan, then a student at Hamilton, and a young man. He accepted and was ordained June

20, 1827. Mr. Swan continued only three years. There are absolutely no records of this period, not even a record of his dismissal. His ministry was successful, and acceptable both to the church and to the people at large. His subsequent life of usefulness and powerful revival work in Eastern Connecticut need no words of commendation. Perhaps no man has ever lived who impressed himself so deeply upon the people in this part of the State.

The year 1830 records the extension by the church of a call to Rev. Asa Bronson, the ninth pastor since its organization. He accepted and remained but one year and a half. A revival attended his labors and fifty-five were added by baptism. His resignation was accepted by the church with deep regret. They held him in grateful remembrance, as is seen by the fact that after an absence of twenty-six years, the church called him to the pastorate a second time, when he served them for three years more. He was a good man and honored his calling.

To succeed Mr. Bronson in his first pastorate in 1832, the church called Rev. Jerome S. Anderson, of Newark, New Jersey. He remained eleven years, when on account of poor health he resigned. During the first nine years of his pastorate, though there was no special revival season, the church gained in unity and solidity, and in its orderly and intelligent management. The records are kept in a business-like way.

Articles of faith were adopted, and one on temperance, which, judging by the discipline, the church greatly needed. A new house of worship was erected and it stands to-day, though since then enlarged and improved. That was accomplished in the year 1834-5, and yet nothing but incidental allusions appear on the records. But the house has stood, on the same site as that on which the first one was built, and has been the home of the church for fifty-five years.

It seems passing strange that such an enterprise could have been conceived and consummated and no record of it made to appear on the church book. But the house was built, and pushed to its completion, and paid for, and it was done under the ministry of Jerome S. Anderson.

Mr. Anderson was a strong, methodical man, and he did for the church what no other man had done. He was a man of good education, of scholarly habits and tastes, and gentlemanly in demeanor and dress. He preached thoughtful sermons; they were orderly, well prepared, and instructive.

In 1837 members were dismissed to form the Anguilla church, to which Mr. Anderson had preached Sabbath afternoons until they called a pastor.

In some respects the last year of Mr. Anderson's pastorate was the most eventful one in the history of the church. In June, Rev. Jabez Swan came as an evangelist, and there began one of the most powerful revivals on record, and it extended throughout the whole year. One hundred and seventy-three were added to the membership, one hundred and fifty-three of them by baptism, and in January seven more were added, when failing health compelled Mr. Anderson to retire.

We are now brought to the pastorate of Rev. A. G. Palmer. He entered upon his duties April 1, 1843, and continued his first pastorate for nine years. He came from the First Baptist church, Westerly, Rhode Island. In November and December following he baptized eleven. Then follow several years with no large additions to the membership. There were dissensions over the transfer of church property to the Trustees. In 1850 there was a marked revival. Twenty-three were baptized and the membership was now 299. Peace and prosperity prevailed. Then Mr. Palmer made a mistake, so thought the church. He accepted a call to Syracuse, New York,

in 1852. He left the church when every prospect was fall of promise. Nine years of faithful service had endeared him to all the people. The church expressed themselves that they accepted his resignation because compelled to do so. Soon after, October 20, 1852, Rev. R. J. Wilson, of New Britain, entered upon the pastorate of the church, which continued three and a half years. They were years of continued prosperity in all respects. The congregation increased so that the house was enlarged at an expense of \$2,000. But during these years two of the most efficient and faithful deacons died, Samuel Langworthy and Peleg Hancox, venerable and honored servants of God. In the opening of the year 1855 another extensive revival prevailed, and seventy were added by baptism.

Mr. Wilson resigned the pastorate April 1, 1856. From this time onward for about five years, till the return of Rev. A. G. Palmer to the pastorate, there were sad and sorrowful dissensions and trials. Rev. C. A. Clark, a most excellent man, assumed the pastorate when the church was about equally divided for and against, and he remained a little less than one year.

Rev. H. W. Webber succeeded him, who on account of intemperance was excluded and deposed from the ministry. There followed a feeling of painful despondency. There was a division of sentiment. Unity and forbearance gave place to wilfulness. In this emergency that man of God, Rev. Asa Bronson, came back and assumed again the pastorate in November, 1857.

There was a revival spirit and thirty-four were baptized. But in December, 1859, because of the absence of harmony and unity, against the protest of a large minority he resigned. The days were dark, so dark that the church voted not to settle a pastor but to depend upon supplies. This continued about a year, and the

year 1860 closed in darkness and despondency. Such a condition of things was deplorable in the extreme.

At the beginning of the year 1861, the church was prepared by its sad experiences, and by the sweet and tender memories of former years, to recall Rev. A. G. Palmer, D. D., of Bridgeport. This pastorate continued for thirty years and was terminated only by Dr. Palmer's death.

At intervals of a few years there were seasons of special revival interest. In 1866 there was a revival of special interest and forty-three were baptized.

In January, 1868, a comfortable parsonage was purchased at a cost of \$3,300.

In 1871, Rev. A. P. Graves labored as an evangelist with the pastor with good results. The membership reached three hundred and twenty-six, the highest in the whole history of the church until that date.

In the summer of 1887, it was proposed to remodel the old church edifice, and about \$4,000 were pledged towards it, and a committee was appointed to secure plans, to whom many were submitted but none seemed feasible. While the committee was considering this matter, three members of the church offered \$12,000 on condition that enough was raised to build a new and suitable church edifice. This offer was accepted, the needed amount was pledged, and a committee was appointed to obtain plans and estimates.

Then came the question of location. The old church site was not large enough. It was settled finally by the donors of the \$12,000 generously giving \$6,000 additional to purchase a new site for a new parsonage, so that the new church might stand on the site of the old parsonage. The corner stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies in July, 1889, and the building was completed in July, 1890.

The building is a tasteful wooden structure of the colonial order. On the south side is a tower twenty feet square, forming the main entrance to the building, while on the south-west corner stands a half round tower, through which is reached the choir gallery, the pastor's room, etc. The audience room is fifty by sixty feet, with a groined ceiling thirty feet above the floor. The organ loft is over the pulpit platform and contains a fine organ, the gift of the ladies of the society. On each side of this room are three memorial windows, said by good judges of art to be among the finest specimens in New England. The interior woodwork and pews are handsomely finished quartered oak, while the carpets, cushions, and draperies are in old red.

Directly in the rear of this room and separated from it by sliding doors is a spacious Sunday school room, well lighted by stained glass windows, and entered from the main vestibule and also from Main street. Connected with this room are rooms for the infant class and library. Above it is the church parlor, with stairway leading to it from the main vestibule. The entire cost was about \$24,000.

But the man who for so many years had been identified with this church as its leader was not destined to long enjoy the new environment. He had for some time been showing signs of failing health, and in June, 1891, he laid aside the armor, after having worn it in the interest of this church during two pastorates aggregating nearly forty years. His name can never be forgotten by this people, for it is woven into a third of the whole history of the church.

In August, 1891, the church extended a unanimous call to Rev. Henry Clarke, who had just completed his preparation for the ministry in the Rochester Baptist Theological Seminary, of Rochester, New York.

The call was accepted, and the first sermon as pastor was preached September 13, of the same year. He was ordained by the church October 1. At the present time (May 1, 1894), Mr. Clarke continues pastor. During the two and a half years of his ministry there has been gratifying growth, both spiritually and financially. Religious interest has been continuous, and baptisms have been frequent. Pastor and people are united in the earnest desire for the spread of the kingdom in the community in which their Zion is planted.

E.

