

Transcribed by Maggie Ball and Wendy Straight, 2006. Transcriber's notes are in brackets and italic.]

Records of the **First Baptist Church in Pomfret** (Record B)
Chautauqua County N.Y.
Commencing August 1832
Jirah D. Cole Pastor

Articles of Faith & c. of the **First Baptist Church in Pomfret N.Y.**

Art. 1. We believe in one God, infinite, unchangeable, self (?) and independent, and that in the Godhead there are Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Art. 2. We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are a perfect (?) of faith and practice, and were given by inspiration of God.

Art. 3. We believe that God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions, and by his transgressions (?) himself and all his posterity in a death of trespasses(?) and to the wages of which to all the finally impenitent is death, the second death.

Art. 4. We believe that our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is possessed of all the perfections of absolute essential Deity, and of all the infirmities of innocent humanity, so that he is emphatically Immanuel, God with us.

Art. 5. We believe that Jesus Christ is the beginning of the creation of God, and that all the members of his mystical body are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Art. 6. We believe that God, according to the councils of his own will, revealed a place of Grace - his own glory being the moving cause - in which the eternal salvation of all spiritual Israel is secured.

Art. 7. We believe that all the people of God, however in scripture by the appellation of the heirs of promise, are the sheep of Christ the elect, and are called in time with an holy calling; not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Art. 8. We believe that Christ the Lord is the covenant head of his people, and that all spiritual blessings, included in, or derived from his righteous life, bitter death, and glorious resurrection, and intercession at the Father's right hand, do particularly and exclusively belong to the people of God, and are secured to them by the oath and promise of their heavenly Father, and that the hour cometh in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.

On Practice.

Art. 1. A Christian church is composed of visible saints, who covenant with each other, to walk together according to the rules of the Gospel.

Art. 2. Christ has instituted water baptism and the Lord's Supper, to be observed by his followers to the end of the world, and they ought to be administered by those only who are in good standing, and have themselves been buried in baptism, and have been regularly set apart to the work of the ministry.

Art. 3. Those who profess faith in Christ and give evidence of true piety, are the only proper subjects of baptism, and dipping(?) in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as a figure of the death burial and resurrection of Christ and his members, is the only scriptural mode.

Art. 4. The Lord's supper is a figurative representation of the sufferings of Christ in having his body broken and his blood shed for us, and an emblem of our feeding on him by faith.

Art. 5. Water baptism on gospel evidence of faith and repentance and a circumspect life, are necessary qualifications for church membership and communion at the Lord's table.

Art. 6. Every church has a right to discipline her own members, and by the voice of a majority of the brethren to exclude offenders who cannot be reclaimed, but to promote harmony in Zion, an advisory council ought to be called from sister churches in difficult cases.

Art. 7. Before an individual brings a complaint to the church against any of our members, he ought to take the first and second steps according to the 18th chapter of Matthew.

Art. 8. Public offenders ought to be public confessors.

Art. 9. Church members are forbid to sue each other in the law, in ordinary cases.

Art. 10. Every church for the support of the gospel ministry, and other necessary changes among them, ought to communicate of their substance, according to each one's ability, that these may be an equality, and

the church has a right to judge of each one's ability, and ought to deal with those as covetous who neglect this duty.

Art. 11. To all the above articles we now manifest our hearty assent.

Fredonia, August 4, 1832

Covenant of the **First Baptist Church** in Pomfret N.Y.

We do now in the presence of God, angels and men, without the least known reserve, devote ourselves to God, choosing the Father, Son and Holy Ghost to be our God and portion, for time and eternity; providing most solemnly to make His word the rule of our faith and practice.

We covenant to take heed to ourselves, to our (?), conversation, and company, not to indulge ourselves in passionate revengeful anger, lascivious talking, foolish jesting, evil speaking, nor tavern haunting; but maintain a peaceful and quiet deportment at home and abroad, and have our conversation and company as becometh the gospel of Christ.

We promise to keep a faithful watch over each other, to provoke one another to love and good works, to be tender of each other's persons, characters, and states; to be just in all our dealings, both among ourselves and towards all men, and to do good to all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

We covenant to observe the Lord's day in a religious manner, and not allow ourselves in unnecessary worldly business, conversation, or visiting, but constantly to devote the first day of the week to the public and private duties of religion, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.

We covenant to practice secret prayer, and while or whenever we are heads of families, to maintain the worship of God morning and evening in our houses, daily to attend to the reading of the scriptures for the instruction of our families, and to use our best endeavors to bring up those committed to our care in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

We covenant to attend the appointed meetings of the church, and stately to unite with our brethren in observing the Communion Supper and all the ordinances of Christ's house to maintain Gospel discipline, to seek the prosperity of this particular Church, and the good of the Redeemer's kingdom in general. And should we ever remove to any other place, so that we cannot enjoy the ordinances of Christ in this particular Church, we will endeavor, so soon as we have opportunity, to unite with some other Church of the same faith and order; and we solemnly covenant in whatever part of the world we may live, to devote ourselves to God, and to seek the prosperity of Zion so far as opportunity may permit, to the end of our days. Depending on God for His assistance, we severally and unitedly make this solemn Covenant. Witness whereof we say Amen.

The covenant of this Church adapted at the organization of the body in October 1808 being lost or mislaid the Church supplied its place on the 4th of August 1832 with the above covenant.

September 1st 1832

Covenant meeting opened by singing and prayer by Elder **Handy** found good union in the church –

1. Church voted to send Elders **Handy, Cole & Johnson** and Deacons **Webster** and **Crosby**, Brothers **Forbes, Saxton** and **Johnson** as delegates to the association to meet at Mayville on the fifth of September instant

2. Voted to hold a special church meeting on Monday next at 3 o'clock for business.

M.D. Harmon, Church Clerk

(?) Sabbath Communion season

M.D. Harmon, Church Clerk

Special church meeting on Monday September 3, 1832 opened with prayer by Elder **E. Johnson**. Heard the report of a committee appointed to visit Brothers **Eli Webster** and **J. Sprague**. Committee reported. Voted to accept of the same.

Report of the committee appointed to visit Brethren **Eli Webster** and **J. Sprague** beg leave to say that – Brother **E. Webster** condemned himself for not having continued his walk and assured committee that he

had (?) in not having brought his difficulty before the church. Brother **J. Sprague** said admitted that he had stated to **Deacon Webster** and Brother **Horace Webster** things prejudicial to the character of Brother **Eli Webster** and sister **Fitch** and still declared he believed the slander true, and Brother **Sprague** at the time behaved very unChristian like and appeared (?) by a very bad spirit and persisted in the slander about Brother **Webster** and justified the declination he had made all though at the first meeting he said he did not believe at the last meeting he said he did believe it – that Brother **Sprague** also (?) at the last meeting of committee that he could prove the case of Br. **Webster** and Sister **Fitch**.

J. Z. **Saxton**, Clerk of Committee

Church voted that the clerk inform Brother **J. Sprague** by letter to attend an (?) meeting appointed to attend to business of which he has been notified by committee appointed by the church.

Br. J.Z. **Saxton** presented a charge against Brother Amos Palmer for unChristian conversation in the public highweigh [*sic*] in conversation with Mr. **Howard**. Put over until a future meeting. Voted that Brother **Andrus** and sister **Eastwood** have letters of dismissal from this church also to Brother and sister **Fails**.

Meeting adjourned to September 15th at 3 o'clock.

M. D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

Adjourned church meeting September 15, 1832.

Opened by prayer. Read the proceedings of the last meeting in reference to Mr. **Eli Webster**, **J. Sprague** and **Palmer**. Church voted that Brother **J Sprague** be requested to retract the whole that is embraced in the report of the committee appointed to visit him.

Voted that Brother **Sprague** be suspended from this church until satisfaction is made by him to the church.

Brother **Palmer** did not appear. Church voted to withdraw from Brother **Palmer** the hand of fellowship until satisfaction is by him made.

M. D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

October 6th 1832.

Covenant meeting opened by singing and prayer by Elder **Cole**. Good union among the Brothers and sisters present. Heard the experiences of Ebenezer **Tuttle** and Jonathan **Hempstead**. Church voted to receive them when Baptized.

Sister Amanda **Sage** presented a letter from the Baptist church in Erie, PA, and wished to unite with this church. Voted to receive her.

Heard the experience of Thomas **Osborn** and Mariah **Hawks**. Church voted to receive them when Baptized.

Meeting closed by prayer.

M. D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

After Sabbath Thomas **Osborn** and Ebenezer **Tuttle** and Jonathan **Hempstead** baptized. Elder **Cole** administrator.

Communion season after (?)

M. D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

November 3 1832

Covenant Meeting opened by singing and prayer by Elder **Cole** and found a desire to press forward in doing the will of the Lord among those present. Sister Susana **Stearns** presented a letter from the **Baptist Church in Hoosick**, Rensselaer Co, NY and wished to unite with this church. Voted to receive her.

Clerk is instructed to write the **Second Baptist Church in Hanover** requesting them to grant sister **Lydia Willoughby** a letter of dismissal from them for the purpose of uniting with this church.

Heard the experiences of Jacob **Morgan**, Betsy **Bond**, Caroline **Randall**, and Lovilla **Gardner**. Voted to receive them when Baptized.

Closed.

M. D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

Lord's day at noon M. **Morgan**, Mariah **Hawks** and Betsy **Bond** were Baptized. Elder **Cole** administrator.

Sister Mary **Williams**, Hannah **Butler** and Mary Sheppard asked for letters of dismissal. Granted. Sister Julieta **Morton** a letter of recommendation to the **Villanova** church.
M.D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

December 1, **1832**

Covenant meeting opened with singing and prayer by Elder **Cole** and found a union in the church.
Wm. **Griffin** related his experiences. Church voted to receive him when baptized. Church voted to hold a special church meeting next Wednesday at 1 o'clock at the meeting house for transaction of business.
Lemuel **Tuttle** related his experience. Church voted to receive him when baptized.
Closed by Prayer by Elder **Cole**.
M. D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk

December 5th **1832**

Special church meeting opened by prayer by Elder **Handy**. Appointed Elder **Handy** Moderator. Voted that the trustees be requested to ascertain if those owning slips in the House will agree to give them up for one year from the first of January next for the support of preaching, if so to rent them to the highest bidder for the above named purpose.
Voted that the church write to Joseph **Plumb**(?) of **Lodi [Forestville]** to ascertain whenever(?) Brother Ira **Halstead** has changed his religious sentiments or has become a Universalist. Voted to dissolve this meeting. Closed by prayer.
M.D. **Harmon**, Church Clerk