

**THE HISTORY OF THE NORTH CHURCH IN
NEW HAVEN, FROM ITS FORMATION IN
MAY, 1742, DURING
THE GREAT AWAKENING, TO THE
COMPLETION OF THE CENTURY IN MAY,
1842. IN THREE SERMONS**

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The History of the North Church in New Haven, from Its Formation in May, 1742, During the Great Awakening, to the Completion of the Century in May, 1842. In Three Sermons by Samuel W. S. Dutton

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SAMUEL W. S. DUTTON

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IN THREE SERMONS.

BY

SAMUEL W. S. DUTTON,
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

NEW HAVEN:
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to [unclear]
[unclear]
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At a meeting of the Church of the United Society, in New Haven, June 26, 1842—

Resolved, That Deacon Nathan Beers, Deacon Charles Bostwick, Deacon William S. Jarman, Hon. David Daggott, Hon. Simeon Baldwin, and Titus Street, Esq., be and hereby are appointed a Committee to express the thanks of this Church to Rev. S. W. S. Dutton, its pastor, for his valuable discourses on its history, and to request a copy, that they may be printed.

Reverend and Dear Sir—

We, the Committee above named, with great pleasure communicate to you the above vote of the Church of the United Society, and in their name thank you for your three discourses, containing the interesting history of the Church from its origin to the close of a century, and request a copy thereof for publication.

Accept, dear sir, the assurances of our great respect and esteem.

NATHAN BEERS,
CHARLES BOSTWICK,
WILLIAM S. JARMAN, } *Committee.*
DAVID DAGGETT,
SIMEON BALDWIN,
TITUS STREET,

Rev. S. W. S. DUTTON.

Dear Brethren—

I am grateful that my feeble efforts to illustrate the origin and history of our Church have been so favorably received. I send you a copy of the discourses, according to your request. They contain facts, brought to light, many of them, at some expense of time and labor, a record of which should be made before the knowledge of them is lost. An imperfect record is better than none. I have added much information in the notes, which for obvious reasons I preferred to introduce in that form rather than in the body of the discourses. The authors from

whom I have derived information, are generally referred to in the notes. In the investigation of matters of which no history has been written, and of many of which it was difficult to find traces in the memory of the living, I have received important assistance from various individuals, among whom I would gratefully mention Rev. LEONARD BACON, Prof. KINGSLEY, and Hon. SIMEON BALDWIN.

I send you these discourses, in the hope that they may add one to many memorials of the righteous, and the many illustrations of the care and goodness of God towards his people.

Very respectfully and affectionately yours,

S. W. S. DUTTON.

DEACON NATHAN BEERS, DEACON CHARLES BOSTWICK, }
 DEACON WILLIAM S. JARMAN, Hon. DAVID DAGGETT, } *Committee.*
 Hon. SIMEON BALDWIN, TITUS STREET, Esq. }

SERMON I.

ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF THE CHURCH.

1 SAMUEL, xii, 7.—Now, therefore, stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord, of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers.

A HUNDRED years have passed away since the formation of this Christian church, and this is the first Sabbath in the second century of its existence.* How it had its origin in a wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit; through what trials and difficulties a merciful God carried it forward, making it an evangelical light amid great religious declension and defection and formalism; what instrumentalities He has here employed and blessed from generation to generation to keep alive, on its sacred altar, the incense of prayer and praise, and in the hearts of its members the flame of love and faith and zeal; how He has increased this church with the increase of God, multiplying its members, and making it a mother of churches; in short, His gracious acts toward you and your fathers, it is my duty and privilege to declare, and your duty and privilege to hear.

When men write the biography of an *individual*, they usually give some account of his parents and ancestry.

* The church was organized on the 7th of May, 1742, (old style.) Adding eleven days for the difference in style, the centennial anniversary is the 18th of May, 1842.

In giving a history of this *church*, I should deem it necessary to give some account of its parent, the first church in New Haven, and of the character of those who laid, and of those who for a century built upon, the foundations of this community, were it not that I find that labor done to my hand, in the full, accurate, and eloquent historical discourses of the present pastor of that church, which were delivered four years since, after the two hundredth anniversary of the formation of that church, and for which he deserves the gratitude of every son of the New England, and especially of the New Haven, Puritans.

For a century that church, which is coeval with the colony, though in common with most of the churches in New England, it had gradually declined in spiritual prosperity, had yet enjoyed internal peace under the ministrations of its three first pastors, Rev. John Davenport, Rev. Nicholas Street, and Rev. James Pierpont, and during the first twenty years of the ministry of Rev. Joseph Noyes. At the close of that period a difficulty arose, which resulted in the formation of this church, and some years after, of this society. Its first public manifestation, so far as the records show, was in December 28th, 1741, when the following memorial was presented at the society's meeting, signed by thirty eight men.

“To the First Society in the town of New Haven:—
Whereas we, the subscribers, have, by long and sorrowful experience, found, that the preaching and conduct of the Rev. Mr. Noyes has been in great measure unprofitable to us, and that we have also reason to think that he differs from us in some points of faith, we desire, (not as we hope out of any prejudice to the persons of Mr. Noyes and our brethren and friends of the society, to whom we heartily wish all good,) that they would allow

us, and others that may incline to join with us, to draw off from them in charity, wishing to be a distinct society, that we may put ourselves under the best advantage to worship God, under such means, as he in his good providence may allow and we hope will bless, for our spiritual good and edification."*

In order rightly to understand and appreciate the character of this transaction, and of those which followed it on one side and the other till this church was formed, and in short, the distinctive character of this church and its founders, we must briefly consider the condition and character of the churches and ministry, and some of the peculiar events, of that period.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, from 1700 to 1735, we find, that religion in New England was in a very low condition. It had degenerated into lifeless formalism, like a tree whose bark and external form are complete, but whose heart and strength have decayed. The distinction between those who served God and those who served him not, was passing, and had in a great measure passed, away. There were multitudes in the churches, who professed to be, not converted or possessed of experimental religion, but only speculative be-

* Records of the First Society. This memorial was signed by Gideon Andrews, Caleb Tuttle, Joseph Mix, Caleb Bradley, Joseph Burroughs, David Austin, Jacob Turner, Caleb Andrews, Enos Tuttle, Obadiah Munson, Stephen Johnson, Samuel Cook, Timothy Mix, Samuel Horton, Thomas Punderson, Junr., Joseph Sackett, Haz. Beecher, Jos. Mix, Junr., Enos Thompson, John Bull, Caleb Hotchkiss, Junr., Benjamin Woodin, Caleb Bull, Timothy Jones, Benjamin Wilmott, Daniel Turner, Stephen Austin, Thomas Wilmott, Abraham Thompson, Mercy Alling, David Punderson, Enos Alling, Jabez Sherman, Amos Tuttle, Thomas Leek, Ezekiel Sanford, Timothy Alling, Amos Peck.