15092 pl

A brief but true account of the proceedings with Mr. James Sherman of Sudbury, who was Dep. Sec. from the Parliament office by the Council of C... at Sudbury, May 22. 1705. and Continued by adjournments till the 5th of ... to the Third month 1706. for some Secondary Matters not finished with ... ministry.

Sudbury Jan: 170 4/5.

Some of the Church met together to Consider what to do about the regard that had ... Concerning Mr Sherman, and how to carry that thing. And to give an account ... him with those things.

1. They told him of some Omissions in not Catechising the Children, omitting ... ing the Queens proclamation against immorality &c.
He declared that he had done what was his duty, and had discharged a good Conscience.

2. They told him, they heard how was a man that did keep Company with the loose sort of People and that he was Guilty in Drinking.
As for Drinking to excess he said Christ Himself drank wine, and that he was ... his Good, and never was the worse for Drinking.

3. They told him they heard there was some disorder at Mr Clerk's ordination in the Company ... way in.
He said he would do well that night, and then he did in his house, and that there was room ... for in the Room he was in.

4. They asked him Whether he was not Invited to stay at Capt. Hoods that night he ... way at Mr Clerk's.
He Answered no.

5. They told him, they heard he went to the Tavern on the Lord day morning & fetched ...
He said he Hundred People were not able to prove so. God forbid he should ... that he never did so, Calling God to Witness that he was. Even in this.

6. They told him they heard there was a man like him that went to get a Licence, & the man ... Where the Boy gave light, and the man of the house was blowing up the fire he went ... Draft-board and took up the Tankard and Drank some Rum and went away. ... This he did Deny, and said he never drank the Value of Rum at one time in his life ... Called God to Witness and his own Conscience.

7. One asked him, if he did not Send Zachariah Maynard for the Tavern for Rum ... Lord-day morning.
He said, no. And then said What if he did, I might have need of it.

8. It was asked him, what if those things should prove to be true?
He said if Persons would Swear falsely, he could not help it, he was a Stranger.

9. It was asked him, if they should see to bring that person out that had ... part of him?
To this he would give no Answer.

Sudbury. March 170 4/5.

At a Church-Meeting at the desire of the Brethren ... of some of the aggrieved Brethren, Inquiring to what was Reported about ... Sherman's Disorders.
Where he owned in a General Confession that he had sinned against God ... sensible that he had done that which was grievous to his Brethren ... he should do so no more, therefore desired that they would forgive him ... for he sorrowed that great part of that which was the work of Satan ... from me, and I will forgive you, said he.

John Noyes. March 2. 1705

grossly Scandalous Concerning my Self, for me known them and Charging my Self with guilt
for them, w^th particulars time, place, Company, Circumstances and aggravations; Words &
a Direct giving the Lye to my Conscience, a gratifying of envy, prejudice and malice and
entertaining Infernal Spirits with delight and gladness to the great dishonour of God his glo-
rious allknowing, heart-Searching God, and Lay a foundation for ruin of the
Undermyning to my Self, which the light of Nature Condemneth, and which the Lord for
bid. But by sin of at any time in any place in any Company, and in any thing and
action wherein my Self, heart, Spirit, failed, miscarried and done amiss in that
which is evil and Sinful to the Dishonour of God, his glorious Gospel, my Sacred places
and holy Employment I desire to Acknowledge it with Confession and Brokenness of
heart, Lying at the feet of God mourning and grieving for the Same exceedingly and
Instantly Imploring the mercy of heaven for Pardon and forgiveness in all by Christ
ing the forgiveness of you my Brethren, and Whole flock and all other of Gods people
and do mercyfully pardon my Self forgiving those who have done evil, Prejudice and
false Speaking greatly and grievously Wronged and injured my Self, Leaving my
the Same by the great and Last day, when every Work Shall be brought into judgment
also most Earnestly Begging your Earnest and Importunate prayers for Pardon of
that my light, the Son, Shining Rays of my life in this evil World, may be Stayed Until me, that my Light may
grace of God, Wisdom and Divine assistance may be Stayed Until me, that my Light may
(the few remaining days of my life in this evil World) may so Shine in my Ministry,
and Conversation, that men may See my Good Works, and you with me may Glorify
father which is in heaven; And that the Meeting and accounts may be full at the
Last, in the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

March 25. 1705.

your most Unworthy, Sinful Watchman, Shepherd
and Pastor,
James Sherman.

After mr Sherman had offered his Confession or Declaration to the Chh and Congregation
bearing Date March 25. 1705, as aforesaid
Some of the Chh and others of the Church were not Satisfactory in no: And after the
Said Confession & Declaration was Concluded on the Negative.
Sermon & Said Paper it was Concluded and Chosen for more and further Deliberation
And Discussed the Same time the Church and the matter the Elders advise was, that the m
to advise with the Elders at Boston about the matter the Elders advise was, that they by
relating to mr Sherman Should be referred to a Council of Elders and Churches for their
Same which was offered by mr Sherman to the Chh and Congregation in Sudbury.
Sudbury, April. 1706.

The Persons whose Names are Underwritten, Considering the Scandalous Miscarriages
which Publickly appeared in mr Sherman and the Incapacity Shu Sundaid Confession
together with the advice of the Elders thought Meet to proceed to a Council, and
go on with the following Charges, viz.

1. Excessive Drinking.
2. Breaking Sabbath.
3. Profaning the Sabbath Day.

Part of the Chh.
viz.
Maj: Thomas Brown
Deac: Joseph Noyes.
Lieut. Nathll Brown
Deac: James Riggs,
Thomas Smith.
Benj: Wright
Caleb Johnson.
Matthew Stone.
Joseph Rice.

John Clap.

Part of the Congregation
Thomas Plympton
Nathaniel Rice
Peter Plympton
Joshua Haines
Wm Jenison
Sam^ll Howard
Sam^ll Wright
Jeremiah Holman
Noah Clap.
John Noyes.

May 2. 1705.

2

Then it was asked Wether a Generall Confession were Sufficient for particular Sins
Then one told him he denyed he was asked to Play at Capt Stows.
He Said its true Brethren, my Clerk and I Dined together and then Smoaked toge-
ther, and my Clerk did Say Twere pity I Shd go from their Company.
Then one told him he was told of nine Mornings going, that he Went to the ordinary
for Drink: five of them we Can prove you Went there on the Sabbath day morning
going and brought away Some in a Bottel.
He Said its true Brethren I Did So: for Said he my Boys were Weary a Working on
the Week Days, and So I Did not Call them up, But got up my self my Maniere way,
and took my Rater in my hand and Went down to Look after my Field and So Went
into Mrs Willards for a Little Rum in a half pint Bottle I had in my Pocket
for my refreshment, as all Ministers do need When they have been preaching.
He Was told of Some ill Carriages at Stow Ordination.
He Said its true Brethren, At one time he Said he Went home with the Revd Mr Rathbun
This, he Denyed. At another time he Said he Went home by noon the next day.
Then he Said he Went home by noon the next day.
Then One of the Chh Stood Up and Said he heard of three things against Mr
Sherman, which he thought Were false, and he was ready to think many of them
both were false, and he did not know Why Mr Sherman need acknowledge with
out things were Charged against him particularized against him; Some of the
Chh Said he Spoke well.
Then One of the Brethren Would have a Vote: Mr Sherman himself Stood up and
Put it to vote himself.
Then Maj: Brown Said he must draw up a Confession and read it to the Congregation
And Salute them for there were many of them Strangers.
Then One Said the Revd Mr Willard of Boston had Spoke Worthily him, that Mr
Sherman Should Speak the Truth &c Why the Chh, this he Said he Would do.
Then he was told of Preaching on the Word Found instead of found In Jesu thy Wounds
wee found the.
Then Said he it was misprinted. One Said he was Confident it was not misprinted in
his own Book. he Said the fault was in his Spectacles, there was no great difference
between an F and a S.
Then One told him he Said at Brac: Mayor that he Slept at Marlboro ordina
ry as well as ever he did in his life.
He Said So he Did when he Did Sleep, But he was disturbed in the night.
Then he was told of going to the Tavern and Drinking Some Rum out of Tankard
which he absolutely Denyed at Brac: Mayor: he found having therein
Went to the Brethren Board, and took up a Tankard, but there was no Rum in it.

Mr Shermans Confession or Declaration to the
Chh and Congregation.

Whereas Whereas there hath been of late very Strange and awakening worke Sathan
Self as to grow in Intemperance in Drinking and other Immoralities, both in and
out of Town, which things have been awful to me to think of and reflect upon.
I do now to you my Beloved Flock offer the following Declaration.
I Deeply
I am Awfully Sensible of my own very evil & Sinful heart & that I am up &
down with much Sorrowful & Sinful Weight of a body of Death hence much
of that Good I ought to do I do not and much of that evil I ought not do (as any
will) I am daily guilty of: and that from the Assaults of Temptation I am even more
Sensible of, which I desire Still to be Charging my Self with before God, and that
with hearty Confessions and Lamentations

[illegible] my Failings and Infirmities as they are many, who knoweth the errors of his
[illegible] mark what is amiss, who Can Stand in his Sight but therein forgive-
[illegible] if he mark what is amiss So I desire to See them and Feel them to be my
[illegible] with him that he may be so to me. So I desire to See them and Feel them to be my
[illegible] and Sore Bitterness, and to be more Watchful Circumspect and pray-
[illegible] that the Lord in Mercy in and thro my dear Redeemer will graciously di-
[illegible] into and keep them in the way of his holy Commandments.

[illegible] ours and Reproach up and down in the Country, as

The Agrieved Brethren proceed to make Choice of a Council.

The Letter Missive

To the Church of Christ in Concord
Grace mercy and Peace be multiplied (Multa Multandi
Reverend and Dearly Beloved.

We Lament with bitterness of Soul The Unhappy occasion of those our Letter Missive to your Selves, which is principally Some Scandalous miscarriages in our Pastor Mr James Sherman; which we professe are Inconsistent with the Gospel minding; and to Public ye Superstitious Private Dealings: As also offences of more private nature for which Christian Satisfaction hath been Labored often according to Gospel order but Cannot be obtained. And knowing Then in Such Case Ecclesiastical Council is a great Priviledge for ease against Perplexity and a Gospel Institution. Those are therefore humbly to request the presence of your Reverend Elders and Beloved Messengers at Sudbury on Tuesday the Twenty Second day of May Current and to meet at the house of Majr Thomas Brown where Shall be Suitable entertainment for them. Then and There to hear your grievances and give up Such Counsel and help as the Gospel in Such Case hath provided. This begging your Compliance with our Request for the Sake of the Glory of God, and the Interest of the Kingdom of Lord Jesus Which principally should have moved us thereto enterprize this Weighty affair. This Which that we may be Carried for ye glory of God, the Credit of the Gospel religion and the Weal of Gods people

we beg your Prayers and rest

Reverend and Beloved
your humble Servants in all
Gospel Service to be Commanded
and your affectionate Brethren
Signed in the name and behalf of
the agrieved Brethren.

Thomas Brown
Joseph Noyes
James Haynes.

Sudbury May 5: 1705.

To the Reverend
Mr Joseph Eliot
Pastor of the Chh of Christ
in Concord.

To be Communicated to ye Chh

Fr Amicum Q.D.C.

Now it may not be amiss to give an hint or Two about the manner of Choosing the Council. The Council may not Choose together by the agrieved Persons and Mr Sherman together. But Some by the agrieved persons & Some by Mr Sherman and the rest of the Church apart. But when they Meet they agreed to sit together into one Council.

The Names of the Council of Churches that Sate at Sudbury May 22 1705. Concerning Mr Sherman were as followeth.

| Boston North Chh. The Elders were | | Boston old Chh. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rev. | Mr Increase Mather<br>Mr Cotton Mather. | Revd | Mr Wadsworth<br>Mr Bridge. |
| Rengers | Mr Winthrop<br>Doct. John Clark<br>Deac: Barnard<br>Mr Thornton | Msgs. | Doct. Cook<br>Coll. Townsend<br>Eld. Bridgham<br>Deac: Merian |

15092 p5

Dorchester Chh, Tho Pitson not Rect
Mrs. { Elder Clap. / Elder Topli.
Roxbury chh.
Rev. { Mr. Walter / Mr. Denison
Mrs. { Mr. Denison / Ddac: Person.
New-Town Chh
Revd Mr. Hobart
Mrs. Ddac: Trowbridge

Waten-Town Eait chh.
Revd Mr. Gibbs.
Mrs. Junia Bond.
Waten T. Middle Chh.
Revd Mr. Angier
Mrs. { Mrs Purcill / Mrs Abraham Gale
Marlboro chh.
Revd Mr Brock.
Mrs. { Ddac: Wood / Thomas Boman.

Meadom Chh
Revd Mr. Rawson
Mrs. Capt Clapin.
Sherburn Chh.
Revd Mr Gookin
Mrs. Ddac: Lenhard
Framingham Chh.
Revd Mr Swift
Mrs. Ddac: Hemingw
Concord chh were Sent to, but did not Come.

The Result and advice of the Council & Churches assembled at Sudbury May 22. 1705.

Having at the desire of the Church in Sudbury and of Certain aggrieved Brethren there, and after humble invocation of our glorious Lord for his direction, taken into Consideration their deplorable Circumstances; we declare and advise as followeth —

1. It appears, that Mr James Sherman hath been guilty of the Sin of drunkenness, and that reproved.
2. For Common Fame Judges from the evidences of that Impotency laid before us, that he has been much to blame in quenching the Tavern in a very indecent manner, and Scandalous manner; and made Practice to sit and Tipple with vain persons there.
3. But he hath discovered his guilt of these things.
4. It appears that he hath neglected the ordinary, now and then, very late on the evenings before the Lord's-day, whereby the Lord's-day was greatly profaned, and a very Contagious Example set before the people.
5. It appears, that he hath not used that Caution in point of Charity, which Becomes a minister of the Gospel.
6. In his Public preaching also he hath discovered Confusion and Indigestedness, and Censured in the other Conviction.
7. He hath not Hitherto manifested that repentance for the evils whereof he has been Guilty, and the Conviction which he is under from the Word of God requires; but he has been far from it, and the Congregation which he stood unto therein, was very displeasing, and an aggravation of his Sin.
8. The Lord hath much humbled us before him, for the Sin committed in Ordaining many false Preachers, and that Congregation which he stood unto therein, was very displeasing, and an aggravation of his Sin.
9. The Miscarriages that have appeared in the Conversation of Mr James Sherman, have been to the great Scandal of Religion, and Grief of the Godly, and that particularly without repentance, may Exclude such out of their holy Communion on earth, & Chambers angelic therefore to Exclude such out of their holy Communion on earth, & Chambers angelic
Gal. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 5. 11.
10. Such Scandals as have been proved against him, are for more evil and blaming in a Minister of the Word, than in another Man. 1 Sam. 2. 17. Neh. 9. 29. Isa. 56. 12. Mich. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 12. Tit. 1. 7.
11. It is to be feared that his irregular behaviour, and the influence thereof has been an Ungrateful Damage to the Interest of Religion in the Neighborhood; which is a thing to be greatly bewailed by the Lord's People that have any value for those glorious Interests.
12. Inasmuch as it is not according to the Mind of God, that one Under such Circumstances should be admitted to the Exercise of the Ecclesiastical Ministry, until the Churches of God have been Satisfied of the Reality of his Repentance in him.
13. We do in the Name of our most holy and glorious Lord, and with all possible Solemnity, Exhort and advise Mr James Sherman to give Evidence by an Exemplary repentance, and Humble and Broken Heart, and Deep Sense of his Miscarriages, and the grievous aggravations of them, that he does attend them which do attend them
14. We advise our Beloved Brethren the Church of Sudbury that they do not Suffer Mr James Sherman to go on with the public Exercise of his Ministry, until they, and the Churches

6\. Called unto the present Council, see such demonstrations of repentance in him that he may be Judged capable of proceeding therein with edification to the people of God.
And it is our advice that for the present the Church of Sudbury desire the Assistance of Neighbour Churches, charitably to Commend help them, as they may see Convenient.

14\. There appears to have been some Irregularity in the aggrieved Brethren both in that they did not earlyer apply themselves to deal with Mr Sherman when they have had so long had some sense of his offences; and in that they did not duly attend order in the affair of Joyning with Mr Sherman and the Church for the Calling of a Council which things we find them ready freely and humbly to acknowledge and give all suitable Satisfaction.

Increase Mather Moderator
Signed in the Name and with the unanimous Consent of the Council.

Mr Shermans Confession of those things he before denied
~~Humbly~~ offered to ~~[illegible]~~ the Chh of Christ at Sudbury.

Whereas it pleased the late Reverend Council of Churches assembled at Sudbury May 22. 1705. after they had heard many accusations against me to exhort and advise me in the Name of our most holy and Glorious Lord to glorify God by an Exemplary repentance: and to obtain and express a Deep sense of my miscarriages, and the grievous aggravations which attend them; These are humbly to express my self with proper Thanks.

1\. I desire with all thankfulness to acknowledge the goodness of God in that it hath pleased him not only to give me an opportunity to consider my ways, but also to bestow on me an heart deeply affected with my great guilt.

2\. I acknowledge the faithfulness of the church and also of the forementioned Council in their Reproof and Advice, and do thankfully own the kindness of both in that they have given me a Space in which to humble my self for my unsuitable and sinful Carriages.

3\. I desire to glorify God to take shame to my self by a free and full Confession of my manifold sins whereby I have greatly dishonoured the name of God [illegible] and given just offence to my Flock and Neighbourhood, and to the people of God elsewhere. Wounded my own peace [illegible]

4\. I desire particularly to express my sense of the great guilt which clearly the late Reverend Council Convicted me of in these particular Irregularities by reason of the great sin of Drinking to excess.

1\. I do acknowledge that I have too often been guilty of that great Sin of Drinking to excess.

2\. I do acknowledge that I have [illegible] and frequently frequented the Taverns and too much familiarized my self therewith unsuitable Company.

3\. I acknowledge my Rashness in Disowning my guilt as to the forementioned evils.

4\. I acknowledge that by frequenting the ordinaries so late on the evening before the Sabbath and also the Lords Day morning, I have greatly prophaned the Lords Day, and set a bad Example before others.

5\. I acknowledge I have not used that Caution in point of veracity which becomes a Minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6\. I acknowledge the Carelessness and repeated heedlessness which I have discovered in Publick preaching.

7\. I acknowledge that the Confession which I read unto the ~~church~~ Congregation was an aggravation rather than a reparation of my miscarriages.

8\. I acknowledge that the miscarriages which have appeared in my Conversation have been so gross that the like in any profession of Religion would be very Censurable.

9\. I acknowledge that it may Justly be feared that my irregular behaviour and the ill Carriage thereof has been of ill Tendency with respect to the Interest of Religion in the Neighbourhood, a thing which I do desire greatly to lay to heart.

10\. I acknowledge the aggravating Circumstances of these my Crimes, by reason of my profession and function [illegible] and Confession of [illegible] forgiveness of God [illegible]

11\. I do [illegible] my miscarriages [illegible] and [illegible] people of God, people who have been offended by [illegible]

12\. And Finally [illegible] with [illegible] a Minister [illegible] in my sincere [illegible] Jesus Christ.

James Sherman.

Sudbury July 2. 1705.

Sudbury July 9. 1678.

The further Advice of the Council, that adjourned from Sudbury to meet this day at Bocton
The Question being put &c.
Whether the Confession which Mr James Sherman hath this day offered unto the Council be Satisfactory, that we can direct the Clerk to accept of it, and restore him to the Exercise of his Ministry?
It was unanimously voted in the Negative for the ensuing reasons.
1. We Understand That that they have not been approved Elders by the Assigned Brethren Such a Scandal of Mr Sherman in regard of his Company since the Erection of the particular Congregation of the aforesaid Brethren
2. He is found in Sub Speaking Since the Last Session of the Council and parliament Clearly he was guilty of the Crime in the Indictment.
3. That he Scarce Confesses any thing of it and in the way of Confessing it he doth much Extenuate the Guilt of it, and Justifies and Excuses himself in many things wherein he has now owned Confession
4. Moreover there appears to Remain Such a Great Cavil in the minds of the Confessors Reasons of the Things which he has now owned Confessed
5. Finally we are informed That he by Some years ago made a Confession that Seemed very Penitent and yet his Conviction has Since Wrought in him all the Scandal which of the Council has Lately Convicted him.

Upon the Whole it is Concluded,

That Mr James Sherman being Convicted of Such Scandalous and Unbecoming Practices in his Pastoral Office and Ungrounded Imprisonments in Sudbury by their Solemn Vote to Acquainting of Parishioners did by the Clerk of Sudbury by their Solemn Vote to her Council &c. in their Office and Capacity Demand him to Declare himself to Borrow him from his Office of the Lord, and then proceed in Such manner to Him Suspended from the Office of the Lord
Mended from the Office of the Lord
Chair of another Pastor.

Jno Cress Moderator
Signed in the Name and with the
Unanimous Consent of the Council.

The Church Vote.

Whereas the Reverend Council Unto whose Advice we referred ourselves, have declared that Mr James Sherman being Convicted of Scandalous and Unbecoming Practices in Imprisoning Parishioners by their Solemn Vote to Demand him to Declare himself to be Suspended from the Office of the Lord in his Pastoral Office and Capacity in Sudbury by their Solemn Vote to Demand him to Declare himself to be Suspended from the Office of the Lord in his Pastoral Office and Capacity in Sudbury do now by their Solemn Vote Declare the said Mr James Sherman to be Suspended from the Office of the Lord in his Pastoral Office and Capacity in Sudbury

Sherman from his Pastoral Office and Declare him Suspended from the Office of the Lord in his Pastoral Office and Capacity in Sudbury

Lord's Day following their hands.

The Brethren took Consent hereunto and desired to manifest their Consent by Affixing up their hands, and

Ebenezer Allen
Nathaniel Stone

James Brown
Samuel Wells
Edward Barker
John Andrews
John Moore
Daniel Andrews
Joseph Andrews
Jonathan Garfield

John Gill
Robert Mann
David Haines
John Allen
Ephraim Rice
James Bradish
Thomas Smith
Benjamin Wright
Benjamin Mann
Richard Mond

Joseph Stay
James Rice
Thomas Rice
Thomas Brown
James Stratton
Peter Stratton
Jonathan Rice
John Rice
Joseph Green
called John

This voted the 17 Day of July 1678 and subscribed by their Messengers hands.

8.

July 10 1705.

Mr Sherman pastor } To my beloved flock the chh of Christ in Sudbury, together
& worthy friends } with the congregation belonging to B Sudbury.

Whereas the awful Sparking voice of an holy God at this day
doth plainly and aloud call for parting and separation from that pastoral relation &
stand in which you and my self have stood in unto this present day, by reason of
the Unchristian Confession under the Circumstances and difficulties at this juncture
& Declaration made by the generality who are Receivers more
have will ing on my part solemnly with the greatest regret and sorrow of heart
to, and Declare in the presence of God and Angels and your Selves my
Dear and Beloved flock that I plunge with and Lay Down at the foot of that
Glorious Lord Jesus Christ my Dearest Lord the King and Glorious Shepherd of the
Sheep & Truely Loved with my Dearest Lord the King and Sincere Mangnifick
church, Declaring not Publickly in a Preaching way yet that a Minister of the
I am no more Neither do I account my self any longer your Pastor hereby
Gospel of Christ in general being Properly and strictly an holy God in his
of the Gospel and Administring the holy ordinances of an holy God in his
Merciful providence shall Dispose of me and also the Relation of your Brother
in Common Faith and Church-membership Unto you.

At Dear I Did Acknowledge my many failings and infirmities and sins
which have attended me in my Ministerial Administration and Conversation
amongst you, Intreating your forgiveness and Prayers at the throne of Grace
cy of Merciful Closing all in and thro the glorious Name of this Dear Jesus
Jesus Christ, earnestly Intreating your prayers for me during and Glorious
the great Shepherd of Souls in his own Time will provide for me and mine in our Dispersed
and Congregation as also Comfortably provide for me and mine in our Dispersed
Condition of Life in his Love and Gracious providence Shall See Meet. Thus I close
with the Words of the Lord as it is Written for our Instruction, Exhortation & Thus
Closs.

James Sherman your Brother and
Loving Pastor

The Council of Churches called by the church in Sudbury being by adjournment met
at Boston Sept. 13. 1705. Passed the following vote.

Whereas at this ch the Sufferings & Declarations of the Council Concerning Mr James Sherman
being Convicted of great Scandal, that rests on him Unless not only Censure for the Particu-
lar offence but also for Communion at the Table of the Lord he has further aggravat-
ed his Impenitence by persisting in his Late Papers of Explanation given to the Chh
at Sudbury Sept. 11. 1705. Wherefore this Council do Declare that he ought not to
be Continued in the Exercise of the Office of a Minister of the Gospel of Christ Set apart for the preaching
of the Gospel and the administring the Holy ordinances: Whereby also the Chh have
in Communion by the advice of the Council Deposed him, and Suspended him from
the Table of the Lord, and from much of the Liberty formerly Belonging to Mr Sherman as a Member
in Communion with the Churches in the Neighbourhood, but now withdrawn from him on account
of his Impenitency, and Declare him no Longer to be Considered in Communion with the Churches
Fellowship, and Declare him no Longer to be Considered in Communion with the Churches
nor any of the Ministers of the Gospel shall Hereafter be Considered in the Office of a Minister
of the Lord, Unless the Lord shall please by Evidences of Repentance to Reopen him.

Increase Mather Moderator

Mr Shermans Letter} To the chh of Christ in Sudbury, Grace, mercy and Peace be multiplied

Dearly Beloved Brethren.

Wherein the late ungoings of Divine providence made an awful breach betweene you and me as Pastor and people Shepherd & flock: wch had lived together verie nigh an age, but now stand to each other in relation no more than in the Common bonds of Christianity: whence arose few things in duty from me desired and required. As

1. That you and I labour to have an affecting sense and apprehension of the advantages left us in our hands for so long a space of time for getting and doing Good in order to God glory, our Soul Comfort and Comfortable living and dying and forever. But the advantages are now no more, under that Solemn, strict and sacred relation.

2. May we now adore our Selves that a holy God hath seen such a black and dark Dispensation of late most sharply manifesting his displeasure and Divine displeasure; and that he may awakening, Soul humiliation and thereby. Let none of us say: we are innocent and free from the evil of Sin which hath procured the bitter evil of all sufferings: wch. every may pretend Self-justification and Innocency; far be it from me so to say; for I am greatly guilty in that my Corrupt Heart no more for your Souls, and endeavours of Christ considering the Soul and value of them: and that my Conversation among you was so little Becoming my holy Station sacred [illegible] place and holy Employment among you. I mourn for, and agains wch we plead the Vnit me of God shed in our hearts into Judgment with me, but my Soul Comfort is, that there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared. The Lord for Christ Sake Pardon us all; and more nearly me who am the Chief of Sinners.

3. I pray and beseech you, with me to Justifie the Honour & Councel in what they have done & [illegible] me and you Especially from Vnder God: for their advice from whom they have received and Counsel to be agreeable to the mind of God's Word. So far as they were directed by him, Faithful and holy Providences: and that you have proceeded according to their Considerations and advice, I do not now dispute, but Commend you for it. Though it falls heavy upon me, Father I am the Lord's Servant in mine Commend you for it. Though it falls heavy upon me, Father I am the Lord's Servant in mine Calling, and particularly for those my accusers, professedly before the Council I forgive them, praying their forgiveness of me: and above all praying that the Blessed God and our Dear Christ may forgive me and them.

4. I do from the Inst gritt and unfeignedness of my heart mourn and deplore my Sorrow and grief that I can't lay upon my Soul even Vnto the sinking of it: and that for mine Iniquities and transgressions that have been many and great in my Conversation and Office among you; and particularly, those evils and sins wch the Honorable Council & Country did charge me for in my Pastoral Charge of you, and from Communion with the Table of the Lord: Intreating your Christian pity, Pardon and forgiveness: and that you will please to remember and take strict heed, even Confusion & Confusion of Face Vnder on to humiliation from the Council advice and their direction: and pray much that God Circumstances I formerly lived in Vnto you, as a Brother in the Common faith and Church Membership Vnto and with you, that I may be further useful in the good Work of the Gospel Ministry in a strange Land where I am and may do much Good, and work Honestly Vnto my own Soul, in the administration and partaking of the Mysteries and holy Supper of our dear Lord Christ: which my Soul, and the Souls of many others in this place stand in Vnto and Longeth for.

5. Dearly Beloved, for a little while time before him shall be no more: when you and I must appear and stand before our more glorious Redeemer who is a [illegible] merciful and more just Judge who is Vnderstanding in Justice, who searcheth Hearts and tryeth actions, and hath eyes a flame of fire. You as a Church and I as your Pastor have been accounted to give and make up of more than 27 years. The [illegible] sequence perusing thoughts of this to me sticks deep to my Spirits and Causeth my heart to tremble. For I know the terrors Calamity, and go Down to the Blackness of darkness forever. Oh then I beseech the Lord Jesus Conducting you and your Children in the way to Heaven, and Repeateth o Lord my hope and strength and Comfort in the day of my Calamity. Let us pray hard and strive hard and work hard, that though we are parted here, we may meet there in Glorious and Eternal Salvation of our Souls in the fruition of all the glories of Eternity.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord, Let me obtain what I in a way of God I seek time: And hasten Vnto me as soon as possibly may be by the Bearer Joh. Dixwell Esq sitting at Captain Price, at the Old Town in the Reach Jurisdiction of New England. My sometimes Dear flock I wish you well, and bid you heartily farewell in the Lord.

Newtowne April 6th 1706.

James Sherman.

To the Church of Christ
at Sudbury in
New England.

Sud. Ministers Letter Delivered unto the late Council at Sudbury, being met Mr Barton (with others) on 8th d. M. 1706 — d. adjst.

That the Church of Sudbury, upon the Communication of Mr Shermans Letter Unto them, signify, that they are willing to bear with all due respect all Infirmities and Imperfections in him, for they apprehend it necessary to receive some Testimonial of his late Good behaviour, before they can look upon his Incumbrances to be well adjusted.

That they also signify, that they understand the Ministers of the Country have been of

and Guilty offended at his presumption in preaching to the Exercise of the evangelical ministry before he has been by a Sentence of a Council deposed from it; and they also Declare that his sentence is like a Due punishment of this disorder.

That they finally signify, that when the Confession of his penitence do arrive that they shall direct Both as to the Declaration to the Ministry in agreeing to them, that is Cannot be done without an orderly proceeding of a Council for it.

And this advice they offered with the Concurrence of many others

by a Clerk
Cotton Mather
Nehemiah Walter
Benjamin Wadsworth

To Deacon Noyes at Sudbury.

Letters from Several Persons in Jersey were received which Testified that Mr Sherman's Conversation while Sojourning in those parts was Blameless: Particularly one from the Revd Mr John Bridge of Northwarke Dated March 26. 1707. [illegible]
Directed to the Reverend & Worthy Esteemed Mr Increase Mather Pastor to the North-Church in Boston. Another from the Reverend Mr Samuel Shepard of Woodbridge Dated March 24. 170$\frac{6}{7}$ Directed To the Reverend Mr Cotton Mather in Boston, New-England

Beloved Brethren

Considering that your Late Pastor Mr James Sherman has for a Considerable time been under Suspension from the Lord's Table and that he has not (So far as we are informed) since that been charged with any Scandal: Considering also that there are Letters come from Several persons in Jersey, which Testify that his Conversation while Sojourning in those parts has been Blameless:

We Conceive that you may do well to remove his Suspension; and so far to Confirm your Love to him as to grant him a Dismission to any Church of Christ Walking in the rules of the Gospel, according as himself shall desire. We Commend you to the grace of Christ and Rest,

yours in the Lord
Increase Mather
James Allin
Tho. Bridge
Daniel Gookin
John Danforth
Cotton Mather
Nehemiah Walter
Henry Gibbs
Benj. Wadsworth.

May 16th 1707.

To my Loving Pastor of ye Church in Sudbury to be Communicated to ye Church.

To the Church of Christ in Sudbury.

Much Honoured and Beloved,

Although I have already in my address to you, Confessed the Sorrow of the miscarriage, in which you have been offended in me, and Confirmed the same to the whole people: yet I am willing to repeat that action, and to leave nothing undone that God and his people may expect from me as a part of my Serious Repentance

I had great hopes, that what of that nature my duty, I Expressed in the instrument you Joyfully received of me (more than a year since) & did accompany with such Testimonies, as Divers Worthy persons in the place where I have resided, have seen Cause to give me, as Divers Worthy persons in the place where I have resided, have seen Cause to give me, as Divers Worthy persons in the place where I have resided, have seen Cause to give me, on my behalf; Would have obtained your Vote for my restoration to your holy Communion on my behalf; Would have obtained your Vote for my restoration to your holy Communion

But I am informed that there are some obstructions and objections; which I Would endeavour to remove with the fullest Satisfaction that may be.

First, I know that some Good men are afraid lest I am not yet recovered out of that awful Snare of Immoderate Drinking, which I fell Entangled in so much often and with so Sorrowful Smiting of the Lord's righteous hand upon me. Truly so it is. The smitings of the righteous have been a great kindness to me. The Compassions of the Lord hold forth from my discovery. I do not know that I have any mixture of sinful Love to any Scandalous practice since those sorrowful Circumstances wherewith I have been so awfully Smitten of God and his people. I have heard it mentioned as if I were not at Church as often as I should be: But I will appeal to Good men that were with me at that time to my vindication.

And now in as much as the Light and the Censure is I hope obtained: with your pleasure to Commit the grace of Pardon unto God and Witness me, at the glorious Lord's day of the resurrection.

Secondly: I understand my absence from the Public Worship of God has been construed as a Coming on a spirit of Apostacy with it. But I have given my usual attendance, at

at Watertown Cambridge Boston &c. And would Love the house of God and Lookon Zion as of more account than all the dwellings of Jacob, only once at Sherburne I stayd with the family where I was, because I was informed and also the Neighbourhood by reason of Mr Rishworth was under his wonted not be abroad that day. And also a Sabbath at Sudbury, where I found my wife indisposed through Grief and my self Exercised with a sore throat and a great Cold which Detained me, which was the only Sabbath I had been at Sudbury for these six years: Except an apprehension I had of producing some Sinful disturbance, and that the Injurious Some, and the Exaltation of others; which might arise unjustly on my appearance there was a complaint to me to be drawn to appear in Publick. But if this Earth any an offence, I ask Christian pardon and forgiveness, and shall be willing to do whatever shall be desired as my duty.

Thirdly I am told the Worthy Person at the London has represented me as guilty of a falsehood. As to the Truth of that matter being Declared in full Court, I discerned how a mistake might happen. I did say to those Gentlemen that I had recommendations about me (which I had from my friends at Sudbury) which I offered to shew him: I did also say, that those were ministers who thought that I might preach where I came; So doubtless he Understood me as if I pretended that my Ministry was more Extensive from those ministers. And I am sorry for any want of Clearness in my Expressions, that should occasion any misunderstanding

Lastly, The Restriction of my preaching occasionally, in this time of Trouble upon me, which notwithstanding the Favourable Construction I might desire. But whatsoever I have been led into I readily acknowledge to the Glory of God, and Profiting to do nothing that may be Injurious to any among the precious people of God.

If any thing I have said may give offence to those my Neighbours of Sudbury, whose Love to the Truth and Publick providences of God I am become I do Unfeignedly Lament. That I can never hope to be serviceable any more Unto my Life Comfortable. I do Earnestly desire all such Jealousies having an Unequivocal Declaration of my Heart. And therefore I do humbly pray that if I may obtain so much regard with you as your Vote for my Restoration (which you were Confident Unto the last week by many Kind Letters) you would also at the same time add Vote my Dismission either to the Church at Cambridge Watertown which was my Original Station or any other Church Walking in the order of the Gospel where the providences of the Lord may give me an opportunity to seek a Stated Relation and Communion.

Hoping I have now done to my own Glory, you Some Reason of my Hope that I have found pardon and mercy with God in the glorious Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Whereupon I would earnestly lay aside all personal prejudices and pray that God would bless every one of you with all Spiritual Blessings in Christ; and that he would Encline your Hearts like the Heart of Man to walk in his ways and Obey his Commandments, who am and Hearty Mourner for all that hath been grieving Unto the Lord or Unto his people: And your Hearty Servant

James Sherman.

Postscript

To Mr Lorin Payne to the Church of Christ in Sudbury

To be Communicated to the Church there

Received of Capt Gardner June 21 1707.

Sudbury June 20th 1707.

The Church being met. The Question being propos'd Whether they were willing or Desirous to grant Unto Mr James Sherman what he Sought for? It was voted in the Negative for the following Reasons.

1. Because they are not fully Satisfied in what was related by him to Mr Smith of Boston.
2. It appeared, that upon the Lord's Day he was at Mr Rushel's the Tavern-keeper in Cambridge, and did not give his attendance upon the Publick Worship of God.
3. He did not appear to them that he had used all Suitable Endeavours for the particular Satisfaction of the aggrieved Brethren.
4. They apprehend some Breach of Promise in not producing his Letter and Meeting the Committee as he engaged.
5. In saying (as was related) that no body had payed him for the time that he was at Charlestown, but Deacon Blain.
6. & Lastly in the Desire of the Church that Satisfaction be given in the way of personal Interview with them.

Attest Jonath Loring, Pastor

Bickham

The I have endeavoured in my poor manner to give what appeared Unto me my Duty to God and

12. and to your end, I remain Still desirous and endeavouring to leave nothing Undone that may be for your Satisfaction; yet Unto my humbling Sorrow I find that you Still remain dissatisfied.

I am willing to proceed in Speaking to the several Points, which have delayed your Compliance with my aforementioned request, and with the advice of So many Reverend and Judicious Pastors that have Written to you on my behalf. As,

1. The Matter of N. London, one Would think it might close it Self; 'tis Impossible for me to Say any thing further to it, I have Explained where the Mistake lay, and I must leave it.

2. My staying at Russells on the Lords Day, was at a time of Extraordinary Circumstances; 'tis not Unknown unto you what they were. And So ~~severe~~ Severe and Stormy and Winter a day as that was, would not permit my going to Watertown to their Assembly, which I Intended. But after what Manner I Spent the Lords day, the family Can Testify. If in any one Instance I fail of Expressing all possible Respect Unto the Public Worship of God in the Assemblies of his People; I would most heartily value and accept the Smitings of the Righteous.

3. I am not Sensible of my having left Undone any thing that I have been directed Unto the doing of, for the particular Satisfaction of the Aggrieved Brethren; but I am Still ready and willing to do every thing, for which any direction of wise and Good men Shall be given me.

4. My promise to meet with the Committee of the Town, was to meet them either my Self, or by my ~~Attorneys~~ Attorneys; And it was a time when my perplexed affairs necessitated my ~~hastening~~ hastening my Journey then before me: But for every thing that has looked in the least degree like a breach of promise, I would readily take any blame to my Self that Shall be layed Upon me.

5. The Report of my Saying, that none but Deacon Haynes had paid me for the time I was at Charlstown Shall be mollified with this, that I Said, I did not remember any who else had done it, nor did I, nor do I.

6. The desire of a Personal Interview, I Cannot but Still humbly desire that it may be waved. My residence is not now in Sudbury, and an Interview may probably both to you and me be attended with much Temptation.

Some of the most Considerable persons, where I Sojourn, are absolutely of the opinion, that it had much better be omitted. Their Counsel is of great Weight with me; and I believe their Judgment will keep with you.

Finally Brethren, I Cannot but renew my request to you that you would grant me what I formerly desired. I do every thing in the World that may make you easier in it. I beseech you, that Charity may plainly get the Upper hand of Prejudice in every one of your Minds: And then you may be as ready to do me Good as the Lord knows I Should be to do for every one of you. I earnestly pray, that the blessed Saviour of the World, who is the head of his Church, and who with open Arms receives those that return to him, with a Sense of their offences, may Smile upon the affairs of his kingdom among you, and may Incline you to express Something of his Goodness towards

your Distressed Servant
J. Sherman.

Boston June 23d 1707

These
To ~~the~~ Mr Israel Loring, Pastor
to the Church of Christ
In Sudbury.

To be Communicated to
the Church there.

Sudbury August 18. 1707.

At a Church Meeting,

Mr James Sherman was by a vote of the church restored to his Capacity of Communion with them at the Table of the Lord, and at the Same Time Dismissed of all[illegible]

Israel Loring Pastor.

The vote of the church (If I mistake not) ran thus,
Whereas Mr James Sherman has entertained the Chh with expressions of his repentance for his miscarriages, for which he has been Censured, and with some answers to Certain Exceptions and objections, where[illegible] the Sincerity of his repentance might seem hidden; and there have been [illegible] ministers of [illegible] Good Conversation in places where he has of late sojourned, and he has [illegible] himself willing and ready to do whatever else may [illegible] seem to be his [illegible] Many Pastors of the Churches, which composed the [illegible] Council that formerly had cognisance of his Case, have advised our Compassion [illegible] to him: The Chh do now restore him;

To his Capicity of Communion with them at the Table of the Lord.
And whereas the Sd Mr James Sherman desires this also, ~~that~~ the church does now dis-
miss him unto the more Immediate fellowship of the Chr in East-Watertown, on
any other Chr. of Christ walking in the order of the Gospel, where he may have op-
portunity to desire to joyn himself in such removals as are before him.

A.