The Declaration of a Number of the associated Pastors in Boston and Charles-Town, with Regard to the Revd. Mr. James Davenport, and his Condukt.

Where the associated Pastors in the Towns of Boston and Charles-Town in the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay in New-England, being assembled June 28. in our stated Course of Meeting, and being then inform'd that the Reverend Mr. James Davenport, Pastor of the Church of Christ in Southold Long-Island was come to Town, sent two of our Brethren to inform the said Mr. Davenport, that we were then assembled, and should be glad to see him.

Whereupon he presently came to us; and after a respectful Greeting, we desir'd him to inform us of the Reasons of his leaving his Flock.

Flock so often, and for such Length of Times as we had heard of; as also concerning his assuming Behaviour in the Places whither he had gone; more especially in judging the spiritual State of Pastors and People, and too positively and suddenly declaring concerning one and another, that they were in a converted or unconverted Estate; thereby stumbling the Minds of many, and alienating the Hearts of others from their Ministers and Brethren, even to such a Degree that some had withdrawn from the Ministry and Communion to which they belong'd.

Whereupon Mr. Davenport in a free and ready Manner gave us such an Account of the Manner of God's working upon him from his early Days, and his effectual Calling in riper Years, as that he appear'd to us to be a Man truly pious; and we hope that God has us'd him as an Instrument of Good unto many Souls.

Nevertheless also it appears to us that he is a Gentleman acted much by sudden Impulses, upon such Applications of the Holy Scriptures to himself, and his particular Friends, Desires and Purposes, as we can by no Means approve of or justify, but must needs think very dangerous and hurtful to the Interests of Religion.
And in particular, by the Account he gave us of his judging some Reverend Ministers of the Gospel on Long-Island, and in New-England, to be in an unconverted State, it did by no Means appear to us that he had Reason and Righteousness on his Side in so doing. Nor do we see into his Scripture Warrant for thinking himself called of God to demand from his Brethren from Place to Place, an Account of their regenerate State, when or in what Manner the Holy Spirit of God wrought upon and renew'd them.

We judge also that the Reverend Mr. Davenport has not acted prudently, but to the Difervice of Religion, by going with his Friends singing thro' the Streets and Highways, to and from the Houses of Worship on Lord's-Days, and other Days; and by encouraging private Brethren to pray and exhort in larger or smaller Assemblies of People gather'd together for that Purpofe: A Practice which we fear may be found big with Errors, Irregularities and Mischiefs.

We judge it therefore to be our present Duty not to invite Mr. Davenport into our Places of publick Worship, as otherwise we might have readily done, that so we may not appear to give Countenance to the forementioned Errors and Diforders; against which we bear this Testimony, both in Faithfulness Love and Care to the Churches of Christ, and also to our said Brother, whose Usefulness in the Church is likely to be still more obstructed by his being deeply inculc'd with a Spirit of Enthusiasm.

And tho' we are not satisfied that the Rev. Mr. Davenport has a Call to preach in the Fields from Day to Day as he has done of late, yet we think it our Duty to bear a Testimony against all those Diforders and that Prophaneness which have been promoted by any who have lately gone forth to hear him.

Upon the whole, we humbly beseech the great Lord and Head of the Church, to lead us, and all his Ministers and Churches, into all the Paths of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Spiritual Edification, for his Name's Sake: And we take this Opportunity to repeat our Testimony to the great and glorious Work of GOD, which of his free Grace he has begun and is carrying on in many Parts of this and the neighbouring Provinces; beseeching him to preserve, defend, maintain and propagate it, in Spite of all the Devices of Satan against it of one Kind or other; that however it may suffer by the Imprudence of it's Friends, or by the
the virulent Opposition of it's Enemies, yet it may stand as on the Rock, and the Gates of Hell may never prevail against it.

Boston, July 1.
1742.

Benjamin Colman
Joseph Sewall
Thomas Prince
John Webb
William Cooper
Thomas Foxcroft
Samuel Checkley
William Welfstead
Joshua Gee
Hull Abbot
Mather Byles
Thomas Prentice
Ellis Gray
Andrew Eliot.