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To the reverend, M[aste]r George Miller, Pastor of the Congregational Church of Christ at Guestwick, & to the Church of Christ whereof he is Pastor.

Much Honored, & Beloved in the Lord,

We believe you are sensibly asserted with our sad divisions, & with the Schism that hath been made in, & from our Church, we have used what means we could in order to the healing thereof, but without the desired effect. We have desir'd, & obtain'd, & been willing to follow, the advice of neighbor Churches, by their Elders & Messengers, but they who have rent from us refused, & when the Elders of neighbouring Churches did write a letter, to press us to put their advice in execution speedily, yet still they refused. We have lately offer'd to them, that we are willing to have the advice upon the whole matter, of any Congregational Elders in England, Indifferently chosen, one half of them, & the other half by us, but they rejected o[u]r proposal, calling it a project that gives a sad prospect of confusion, not of union, giving this reason, because we will not be for keeping M[aste]r Smyth. We have endeavoured by letters to convince them, of their schism, & Covenant breaking, & of many other sins whereby they have greatly offended: As to the charge of Schism they positively deny it, & recriminate that we are guilty of it, because we will not hear M[aste]r Smyth, whom they would impose upon us, As to all the rest (w[hi]ch we w[i]th great grief of heart have represented to them) they don't vouch safe to take the least notice thereof, either to clear themselves, or to satisfie us, but say they will forgive us, We acknowledge ^{^that^} we are sinners, & need forgiveness both from God, & man; But when such sins are com[m]itted with an high hand, whereby Christs name is dishonour'd, his Authority trampled upon, his Ordinances despis'd, & the peace & order of the Church quite broken, we judge that we cannot in faithfullness to our Lord Jesus Christ, & his Truth, & to Gospel holiness, forbear witnessing against them. We apprehend (& we think upon good grounds, & could wish that it were our mistake) that they don't so much desire to be in Gospel-Order themselves, & to partake of those Ordinances that belong thereunto, as to hinder us from getting into Gospel-Order, & from feeling pure & peaceable communion with Christ, & with one another, in that Ordinance of the Lords Supper which these divisions have so long hindred us of, & that to this end, they do, & will lay all the blocks they can in our way, so in time to cause a dissolution of our Church, as built upon Congregational principle reveal'd to us in the word of God, & to erect a new model according to their own will. We are lamenting after the Ark of the Lord, earnestly desiring Gospel-Order, & pure & peaceable Communion in that holy Ordinance, of which we have been so long hindred, & ^{^we^} beg of God to set us in the way of his steps, & we desire the advice of Sister Churches how we may go about it in a right manner. We judge that we can't act according to that direction Matt[hew] 18. 15, 16, 17. as not reaching our case & being impracticable by us; for that concerns a brother trespassing, but these are a faction acting tumultuously & arbitrarily. If they had { } it as Christians

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(though quarrelling) we might have follow'd the example of { }er Abraham Gen[esis]: 13. 8,9. but they have acted so unchristianly, & so far transgress all bounds, that we cannot think them meet for Church fellowship without repentance, & cannot with a good Conscience dismiss them with recommendation to Church fellowship. The only way that we can see to be left to us, is to withdraw from them & untill they repent according to 2 Thess[alonians]: 3.6. Rom[ams]. 16. 17. & afterward to renew our holy Covenant, & that we may not mistake in the manner of our doing it, we humbly, & earnestly, desire yo[u]r plain, & full answer to this question.

Whether in our calling Church meetings to consult of the proper way, & means of our returning into Gospel-Order, we are oblig'd to own them as members with us, who have broke Covenant with us, & made an open & notorious Schism in, & from the Church, & so have cut off themselves, & have aggravated it by many unchristian carriages? & whether it be proper and necessary for us, to take any further notice of them, than to declare that we withdraw from them untill they repent, & to send them a written Copy of our declaration? We hope that your answer to this question, may be a means of helping us to some light, or if you know any other way, that is more Scriptural, & practicable by us, we pray you to com[m]unicate it to us freely, & we shall be very thankfull to you for it. We beseech you in the bowells of Christ to have pity on us, & to help us with yo[u]r advice & prayers; We have been long afflicted with this flame, & our Spirits are even worn out thereby, we are afraid least the Congregational Church of Christ in this City, should be quite ruin'd. We pray God to continue your peace, & the Comforts of the Holy Ghost to you, & to edifie & multiply you, who are

Norw[i]ch Yo[u]r afflicted bretherein in Christ, & sign it in the name,
October 31th 1701 & by the appointment of the Church walking with us

we have sent a copy of this to eight
Churches more, that some may get the
light we can from several Churches
John Stackhouse

John Stackhouse Elder
John Mayes
Joseph Harford
John Rose
Thomas Browne

Jeremy Tompson
John Grimln