

A serene landscape with misty mountains and a calm lake reflecting the scene. The text "Methodism 1738 - 2020" is overlaid in the center.

# Methodism 1738 - 2020

# The History of Methodism

Early Christian Church (CE 33)

Roman Catholic Church

Protestantism (1517)

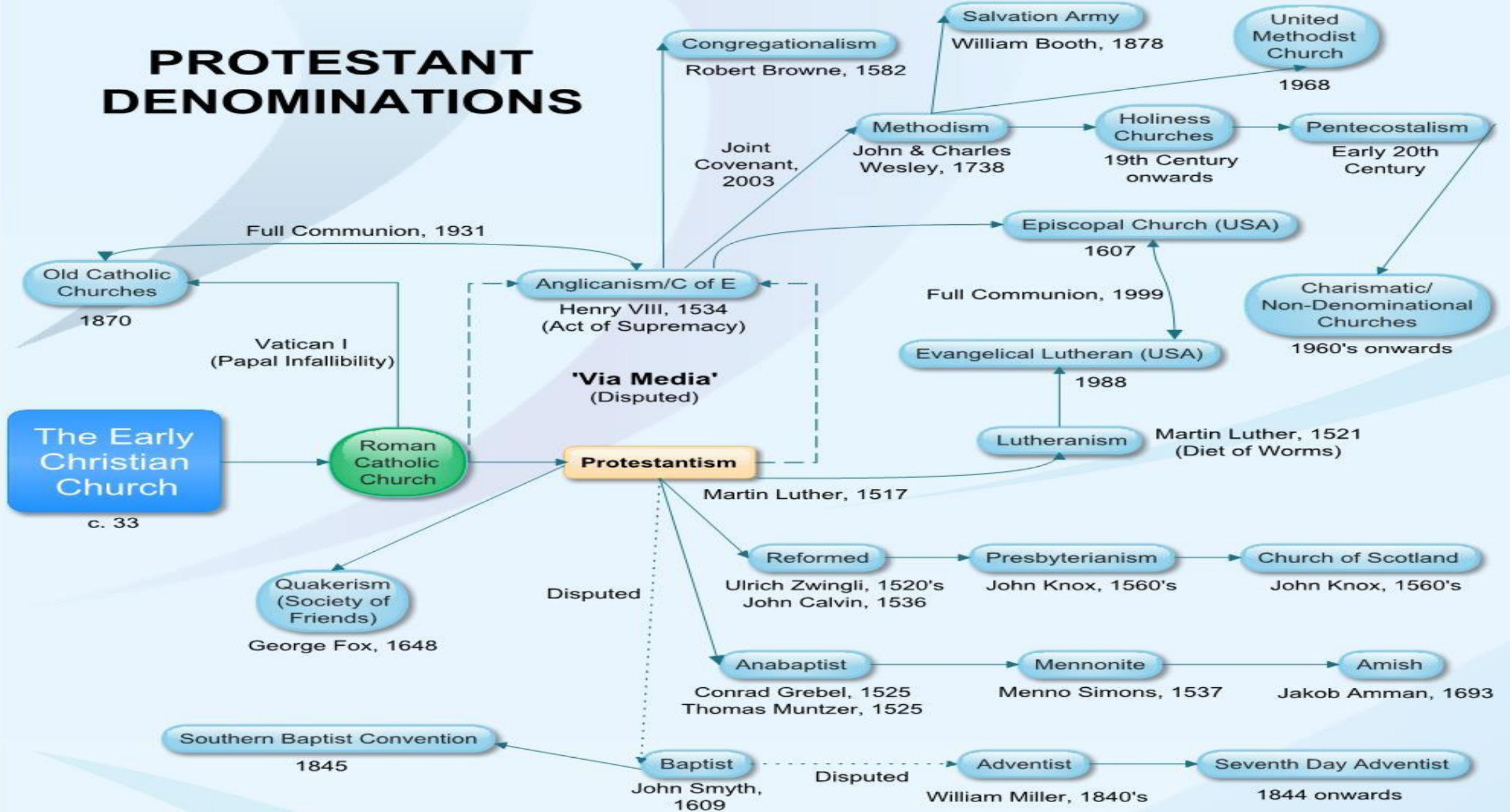
**Protestant denominations**

Church of England (Anglicanism) (1534)

Methodism (1738)

United Methodist Church (1968)

# PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS



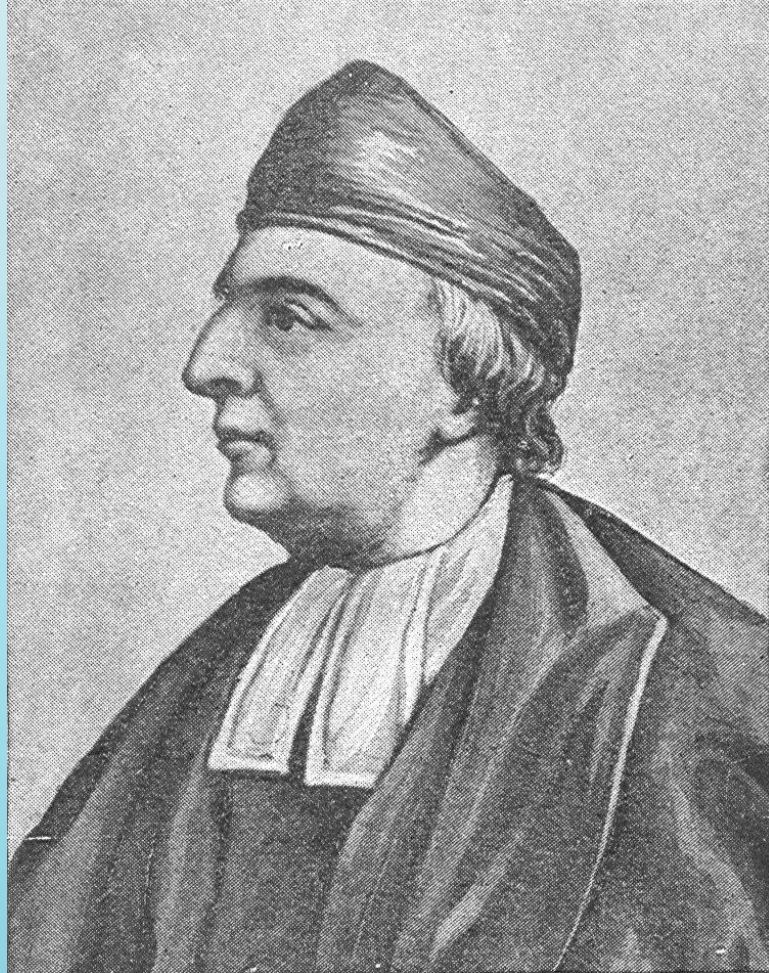


# Parents of John and Charles Wesley



Samuel and Susannah Wesley parents of 19; children, 9 survived to adulthood.

# Samuel Wesley



Samuel Wesley was a Church of England priest and a Dissenter as were his father, John Westley and paternal grandfather, Bartholomew Westley, before him. English Dissenters disagreed or opposed state interference in religious matters, founded their own churches, educational establishments and communities. Some emigrated to the New World, including the Puritans and Pilgrims.

John's great-grandfather Bartholomew Westley held the priesthood at Charmouth (from 1640) and Catherston (from 1650), in Dorset, and was ejected from both in 1662. He continued to preach as a Nonconformist, and he practiced medicine. He was eventually forced to leave, dubbed a fanatic and a "puny parson", because of his small stature.

His son and John's grandfather, John Westley, was imprisoned for not using the Book of Common Prayer, imprisoned again, and then ejected in 1662. He continued to preach in small gatherings at small towns in Dorset until his death in 1678.

The Book of Common Prayer was the "law" at issue in 1661, similarly to the Book of Discipline in 2019.

# Susannah Wesley, the “Mother of Methodism”

Susanna was well educated by her father. Before she was out of her teens, Susanna knew Greek, Latin, and French and was proficient in theology and philosophy.

Susanna was determined that all of her children be well educated. She taught them herself. School lasted six hours per day beginning on the day after a child's fifth birthday. Susanna spent one hour each week with each child talking about the beliefs of the church.

Despite the Wesleys' poor financial condition, all three sons earned M.A.s from Oxford. All three were ordained in the Church of England. The eldest, Samuel Jr, became a teacher at Westminster in London and helped his family generously by sending home money, and by taking Charles especially under his wing when the younger brother came as a student to Westminster. Samuel Jr later became head of Blundell School, a Free Grammar School in Tiverton, Devon.



# Methodist History



John Wesley, 1703 – 1791  
15<sup>th</sup> of 19 children



Charles Wesley, 1707 – 1788  
17<sup>th</sup> of 19 children



# Methodist History



JOHN WESLEY RESCUED FROM THE FIRE AT EPWORTH RECTORY, 1709.

By H. P. PARKER.

By 1697 the Wesley family were living in the Epworth Rectory (parsonage). Both John and Charles were born there. There is a famous story about John as a child: In February 1709 a fire broke out in the thatched rectory. There is a suspicion that the fire was started by arson, a sign of how much Samuel Wesley's preaching had provoked local antagonism. John, then aged just 6, was dramatically rescued from the flames like '*a brand plucked from the burning*'. One man had to stand on another man's shoulders and pluck John from a first-floor window before the building collapsed.

# Methodist History

## The Old Epworth Rectory

What is now called the Old Rectory was built in 1709 and was the childhood home of John and Charles Wesley. The Old Rectory served as the residence for the rector of St Andrew's Church until 1954. It stood empty for several years before it was purchased by the World Methodist Council. It is now a museum.



# Methodist History – the “Holy Club”

In 1727, while at Oxford, Charles gathered a few of his fellow students to meet together 3 or 4 times a week in a “study group.” Their intention was to skim and discuss the classics during the week and read a book about divinity on Sundays. They also set out to encourage each other in living a holy life.

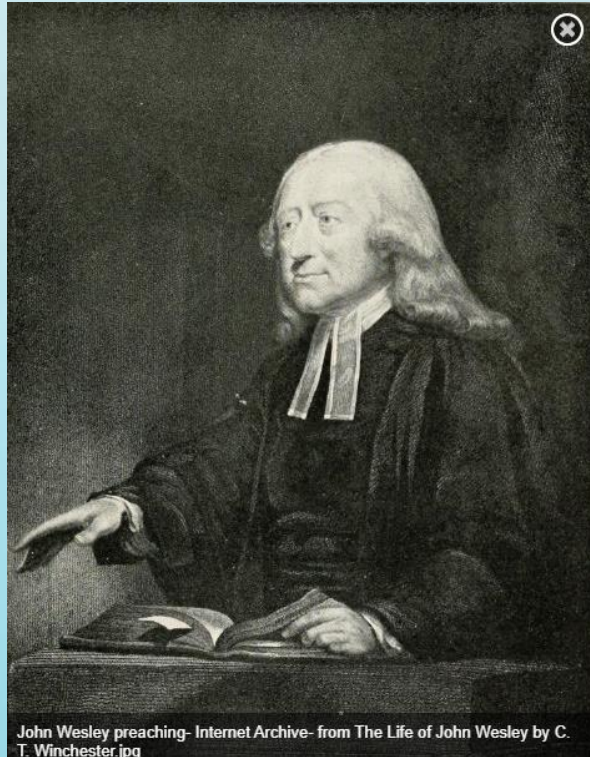
His elder brother, John, joined in 1729, soon becoming its leader and molding it in line with his own convictions. Other students mocked them, saying they were the "Holy Club", "Sacramentarians", and "the Methodists", being methodical and exceptionally detailed in their Bible study, opinions and disciplined lifestyle. After graduating with a master's degree in classical languages and literature, Charles followed his father and brothers, being ordained as an Anglican priest in 1735.

Because many of the Holy Club's members went on to lead the Evangelical Revival within the Church of England, this organization is said to be the root of Methodism.



Charles Wesley, 1707 – 1788

# Methodist History – John and Charles Wesley Visit America



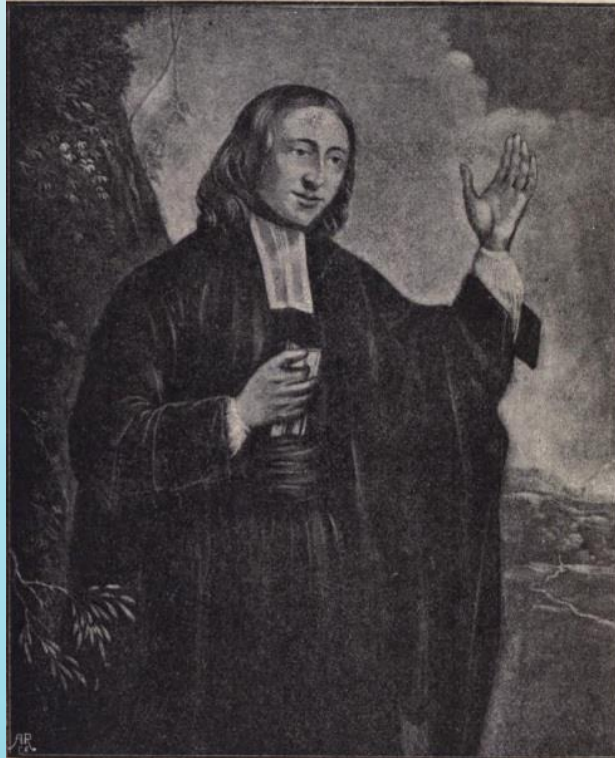
*In 1736, John and Charles Wesley arrived in Savannah, Georgia. Although disappointing, the mission impacted the early stages of Methodism.*

John and Charles Wesley set sail to Savannah, Georgia on October 14, 1735 and arrived in February 1736. The founder of the Georgia colony, James Oglethorpe, desired for John to be the priest of a new Savannah parish, one which would attract and convert Native Americans. He ended up mostly catering to European settlers.

For the most part, the excursion proved to be a disaster. Charles got sick and returned to England in July 1736. John had difficulty adapting to the area and became involved in disputes with female colonists. John eventually left Georgia in December 1737.

Nonetheless, the trip to America produced the first Anglican Church in Savannah and the first Anglican hymn-book in America (Collection of Psalms and Hymns, 1737), written by John Wesley. It also impacted the early stages of Methodism with the establishment of the first "Methodist" religious society meeting at Frederica in 1736

# Methodist History – John Founds the Methodist movement

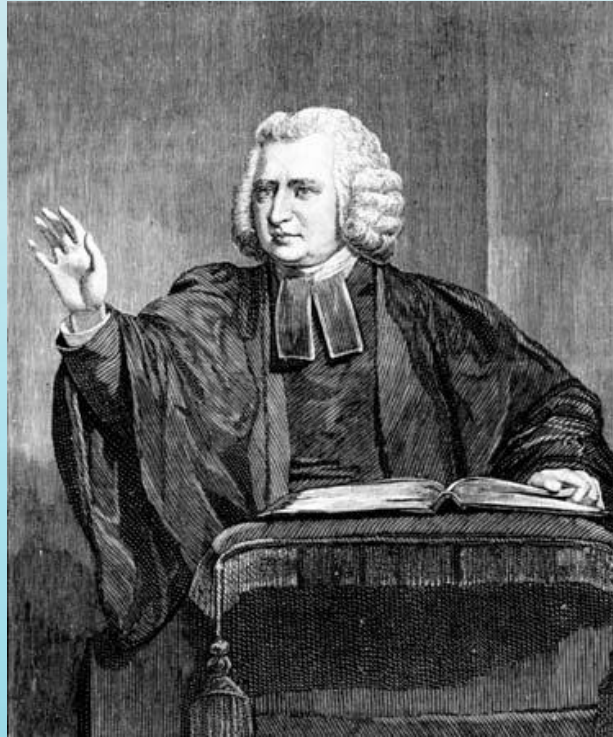


*John Wesley (1703-1791) founded the Methodist movement.*

In 1738, John Wesley experienced an evangelical conversion, in which his "heart was strangely warmed." This experience led him to the belief of salvation through Jesus Christ alone, available to anyone who asked, which became a large emphasis for Methodist societies.

Wesley spent the remaining 52 years of his life as an itinerant minister, preaching more than 40,000 sermons and averaging 4,000 miles of travel annually. Although he himself remained a priest in the Church of England until his death, he gave the Methodist societies, which he helped found, a legal constitution, which led to an independent trajectory for Methodism.

# Methodist History – Charles Wesley – Hymn writer



*Charles Wesley (1707-1788) was an important leader of the Methodist movement, the younger brother of John Wesley, and an influential hymn writer.*

Charles Wesley was educated at Oxford and ordained, like his brother, John. At Oxford, he joined the Holy Club, or Methodists, a group of young men interested in spiritual matters and works of charity. He was influential in having his brother John join the group. Both he and his brother did mission work in the colony of Georgia briefly and later experienced a religious conversion under the influence of Peter Bohler and the Moravians.

However, he also had a distinct legacy from his brother. Although he engaged in missions like John, he is more known as a hymn writer, composing more than 6,000 hymns in all. Some of his well-known hymns include "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today." In addition, he was strongly against separating from the Church of England.

# Methodist History – Key Dates

1733 First Great Awakening

1736 John and Charles Wesley

1744 John Wesley

1750 Charles Wesley

1763 First Methodist Societies

1769 First Methodist Missionaries

1771 Francis Asbury

1780 Wesley's Collection of Hymns

1771-1816 Francis Asbury (continued)

1784 Methodist Episcopal Church - Christmas Conference

1790 Second Great Awakening

1800 United Brethren

1816 AME

1835 Indian Manual Training

1843 Wesleyan Methodist

1843 Sojourner Truth

1845 Methodist Episcopal Church South

1860 Free Methodist

1864 Fanny Crosby

1870 CME Church

1880 Female Ordination at issue

1908 Social Creed

1939 Northern and Southern Unite

# Methodist History – Key Dates

1946 Evangelical Methodist Church

1956 Ordination of Women

1968 United Methodist Church

1968 Wesleyan Church

1980 First Woman Bishop

2012 Sexuality Amendment Denied



# Methodist History – Key Events

Click on the link below for more information on the key events in the history of what has become the United Methodist Church

[Methodist History – Key Events](#)