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CH 600 History of Methodism

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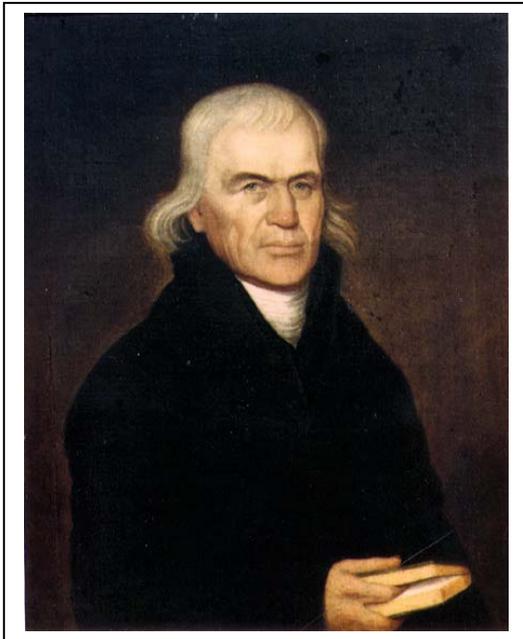
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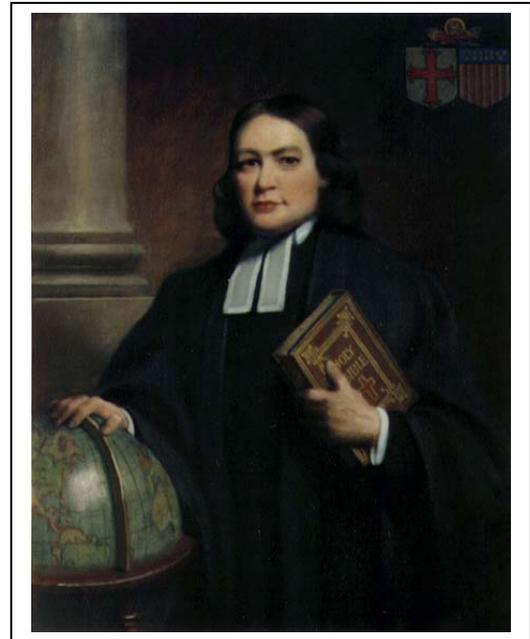
Asbury Theological Seminary

History of Methodism CH 600

Two hours, Fall Term, 2008
Professor Kenneth Kinghorn



Francis Asbury
(1745-1816)



Thomas Coke
(1747-1814)

*Pictures from the World Methodist Museum,
Lake Junaluska, NC
Photographs by Kenneth Kinghorn*

History of Methodism

CH 600, Fall Term 2008, 2 hours
Tues & Thurs 9:30-10:20
Professor Kenneth Kinghorn

1. Course Description

This course surveys American Methodism from its beginnings to the present. The lectures focus on the theological, cultural, and institutional themes that shaped Methodism in America. The former Methodist Episcopal Churches (north and south), the Methodist Protestant, and the Evangelical United Brethren backgrounds of the United Methodist Church are studied. We will devote one session each to the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Free Methodist Church. As time allows, we will study the theological and institutional trends that have developed in twentieth-century American Methodism.

2. Learning Goals

- (1) To feel and understand the Methodist heritage, so the student who has interest in Methodism grasps that our generation lives on the growing edge of this important Christian tradition.
- (2) To gain basic factual knowledge of people, ideas, places, events, and movements that helped shape the history of American Methodism.
- (3) To see the causes that motivated Methodism to develop its beliefs, practices, and structures and to grasp why the church adjusted them.
- (4) To understand the theological shifts that took place within American Methodism.
- (5) To view present challenges and opportunities in the light of the prior beliefs and actions of those in the Wesleyan tradition.
- (6) To evaluate one's Christian vocation in the context of United Methodist history.
- (7) To gain insight into the nature of Christian ministry in the context of United Methodism.

3. Procedure and Requirements

The course consists of reading, class lectures, discussion, three examinations, and a research project. The course outline contains more topics than we will cover in this two-hour course. However, I am including a basic outline of the history of American Methodism to provide a sense of perspective and to serve as a guide for your future study.

4. Texts

Required texts:

Kinghorn, Kenneth, *The Heritage of American Methodism*, Lexington: Emeth Press, 2008.
 Norwood, Frederick A., *The Story of American Methodism*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974.
 Those students who have read either of these books can arrange to read alternate materials.

Recommended for present and future reference:

Rowe, Kenneth E., Editor, *United Methodist Studies: Basic Bibliographies*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 3rd edition, 1992.

5. Bibliography

The professor's bibliography of Methodism has grown to more than 100 pages, and it is impractical to copy it for each class member. An excellent basic bibliographical source for seminarians and United Methodist pastors is Kenneth E. Rowe's book recommended above. It's in the bookstore. For book collectors of Methodistica, this volume will prove useful in your browsing in used bookstores. (*HAPPY HUNTING!*) Rowe's work, *United Methodist Studies: Basic Bibliographies*, has as its purpose "to provide a selected list of the basic resources for students and instructors of seminary-level courses in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity, and to indicate minimum standards for libraries to support such courses.... Out of print works are included only if no suitable alternative exists in print." Rowe's book arranges the materials topically, and the volume contains an index of authors and editors. The list of current periodicals published by the worldwide family of Methodist churches is comprehensive.

6. Research project: A Dictionary Article

Guidelines for writing the Dictionary Article



This written assignment is to read like a dictionary or encyclopedia article. That is, it should be "tight," with no excess verbiage. Avoid giving your personal opinions or preaching. This writing should be generic and free from your personal literary idiosyncrasies. Scrupulously, give accurate *facts*—such as birth dates, major events, turning points, and contributions. If your article is on a person, put birth and death dates immediately after the person's name. For example: **WESLEY, JOHN** (b. 1703—d. 1791). [Still better, **WESLEY, JOHN** (b. June 17, 1703—d. March 2, 1791)] Prepare your article as though the reader knows nothing about your subject, yet do not talk down to the reader or fail to include important details. Include in your articles the information you would want if you were consulting a dictionary for basic information about the person, event, doctrine, or institution that you are looking up. Length is not critical. Aim for the best quality writing of which you are capable. A one-page paper of

excellence is better than a 6-page paper that rambles and sounds unprofessional. Some subjects will need only a few paragraphs to do the job. (For example, an obscure nineteenth-century

circuit rider will not need the same coverage as, say, Thomas Coke.) You are writing a dictionary article, not a research paper. Therefore, do not use footnoting.

For general sources, you may want to begin with two standard Methodist encyclopedias: (1) *Cyclopaedia of Methodism*, edited by Matthew Simpson, 1876, revised, 1883, and (2) *Encyclopedia of World Methodism*, two vols., ed. Nolan B. Harmon, 1964. However, do not limit yourself to these sources, because your article would be only a rewriting of work already done.

Also, you will find helpful, *The History of American Methodism*, 3 volumes, ed. Emory Stevens Bucke, Abingdon Press, 1964. It's well indexed and reliable. The footnotes will lead you to primary sources, which of course are desirable. You will also find helpful the large number of standard histories of Methodism. (See Ken Rowe's bibliography.) Many of these histories will lead you to primary sources, monographs, and biographies. Sometimes, journal and magazine articles are available (check with a reference librarian).

Not every person on the list of topics has a biography or autobiography that tells about his or her life. Therefore, it is often fruitful to consult a conference history. Every Annual Conference (or its predecessor conference) normally has at least one history of the conference, and many conferences have several histories. These histories contain biographical information that might not appear elsewhere.

Don't forget to consult early issues of the *Methodist Magazine* and the *Methodist Quarterly Review*. Publishers bound them by the year—that is, the four quarterly issues of a given year appear in a single volume. These journals are splendid resources for writing articles on individual people. For example the 1879 *Methodist Quarterly Review* contains an engraving of Bishop Reuben Nelson (the only picture of Bishop Nelson of which I am aware). It also has a 4-½ page eulogy of this man. These pages would help one write a splendid dictionary article. The engraving is of excellent quality, as were most nineteenth-century engravings in Methodist journals.

Do not neglect sources close to the subject. For example, if you were to write an article on Union College (a United Methodist college in Kentucky), that school would probably provide you with helpful information, including a quality color photograph. Most educational institutions have a development office that will cooperate with you. Then, also, individuals are often willing to help. On one occasion, I needed material on Lawrence L. Lacour (who died in 1999 at the age of 92), so I wrote Millie, his widow. She sent me invaluable information that I found nowhere else, and she happily did so.

When possible, get a *high quality* photograph of your subject. Muddy reproductions from copy machines are not worth the bother. A photograph using a quality macro lens is ideal. If you are able to provide me with a photo of this quality, please protect the negative and attach it to the back of the photograph. Color photographs are preferred, and if you photograph a color picture or portrait, do so in natural light (florescent lighting distorts the colors in color photographs).

Many nineteenth-century engravings are, of course, black and white, and these are often all we have. Remember, however, that most of the existing engravings were engraved from original color portraits. If you can find the original color portrait, that would be wonderful. In my book, *The Heritage of American Methodism*, I was fortunate to find several original color portraits

whose owners allowed me to photograph the portraits, with due credit. If you don't have the equipment to capture a quality photograph, perhaps a photographer friend could do it for you. Sometimes, I have been able to get a good-quality picture from the Billy Graham Center in Wheaton, IL, the New York Public Library, or from a seminary such as Garrett or Drew. I encourage you to inquire, search, dig, and ask.

Your article should be from a half page to two pages, plus the photograph and negative (if you can find a clear picture). Provide a bibliography for your article. Please print your article in hard copy. This lecture focuses on the contributions of women to American Methodism. Throughout the history of American Methodism, women have outnumbered the men in church membership and in service. Of special interest is the long struggle for female lay delegates and for the ordination of women in Methodism (gained in 1956). Be sure to put your name on your paper.

Summary of Do's and Do not's about your dictionary article:

DO:

- Do format your subject in bold print and capital letters, and include dates of birth and death. Put last name first. [**WESLEY, JOHN** (b. June 17, 1703—d. March 2, 1791)].
- Do use complete sentences and well-crafted prose.
- Do state in the first one or two sentences a summary identification of the subject of your article. Next, begin with the birth of the person or the founding of the institution about which you write. End the article on an individual with a summary of the person's contributions and the date of death and circumstances, which may include a quotation from the conference records or contemporary paper or journal. For example:

ASBURY, FRANCIS (b. August 20, 1745—d. March 31, 1816) was the second bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the first Methodist bishop consecrated in the United States. He was born in Handsworth, Staffordshire, England on August 20, 1745, and his parents gave him a good elementary schooling of about seven years when he was between the ages of six and thirteen . . . Asbury died in Spotsylvania, Virginia, March 31, 1816 . . . His major published works were . . .
- Do list the subject's major printed works.
- Do include the most important distinguishing features, mission, and work of the person or institution about which you write.
- Do use standard margins: Top, 1 inch; Bottom, 1 inch; Left, 1.25 inches; Right, 1.25 inches. Avoid fancy or "cute" formatting. Keep your formatting plain, simple, standard.
- Do use page numbers with .5-inch headers and footers. Put your page number at the right hand side of the top of the page.
- Do add a brief bibliography with your article. Your short bibliography should contain relevant primary sources, autobiographies, biographies, and monographs. If your article is on an institution, it is fitting to include the history(s) of that institution, if one exists (in print or out of print).

5. Communication

For technical support, library research support, library loans and virtual media contact Information Commons: Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu Phone: (859) 858-2233; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733. They are located on the main floor of the B.L Fisher library

Classroom communication is accomplished with the open-source Moodle platform, accessed using a web browser (Firefox is preferred). By logging into <http://virtual.asburyseminary.edu> you will have access to this course. The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

1. The Course Information Center, in the center of your screen, contains many features to be used throughout the semester, including:
 - a) Course News and Announcements, where I will post items important for the entire class;
 - b) Syllabus, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;
 - c) To Professor, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;
 - d) Course Questions, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;
 - e) Prayer Forum, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;
 - f) Open Forum, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.
2. Modules, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.
3. Resources, a section located on the left side, provides links to items you will want to use often in the semester.

CH 600, History of Methodism

Lecture Outline

I. American Methodism's British Legacy

This session deals with the organizational and theological heritage of American Methodism. The lecture does not study the details of Methodist polity and theology, as these two subjects are covered in other courses at Asbury Theological Seminary--United Methodist Polity and United Methodist Doctrine. The purpose of the lecture is to show the British roots of American Methodism .

KINGHORN, Chapter 1.

NORWOOD, Introduction, Chapters 1-4, pp. 15-60.

II. 1766: The Beginnings of American Methodism

This session discusses the first two permanent Methodist communities in America: those led by Philip Embury in New York City and Robert Strawbridge in Maryland. Attention is also given to Barbara Heck, Thomas Webb, George Whitefield, and John Wesley's early "missionaries to our brethren in New York."

KINGHORN, Chapter 2.

NORWOOD, Chapters 5-7, pp. 61-93.

III. 1784: American Methodism Becomes a Church

In 1784, American Methodism moved from a cluster of societies to a new denomination--The Methodist Episcopal Church. This lecture examines the questions of the sacraments and ordination. Attention is given to Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury and the circumstances leading to the Christmas Conference. American Methodism's doctrinal standards also receive attention.

KINGHORN, Chapter 3.

NORWOOD, Chapter 8, pp. 94-102.

IV. 1800: The Beginnings of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ

This session looks at Philip William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, Christian Newcomer, and other leaders of the United Brethren. The early parallels between the United Brethren and the Methodist Episcopal Church are considered. Subjects of particular importance include the United Brethren *Confession of Faith*, denominational publishing, and educational institutions. This session also deals schisms in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. In 1946, this church merged with the Evangelical Church to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church. In 1968, this denomination joined the Methodists to become the United Methodist Church.

KINGHORN, Chapter 6.

NORWOOD, Chapter 9, pp. 103-110.

V. 1803: The Beginnings of the Evangelical Association, and the Formation of the Evangelical United Brethren Church

The Evangelical Association, or “Albright’s People” paralleled the United Brethren in working among German-speaking Americans. This session focuses on the church’s founder, Jacob Albright. In addition, the class will study Joseph Long, John Seybert, and W.W. Orwig. The session also considers the Evangelical Church’s distinctives, doctrine, polity, and institutions.
KINGHORN, Chapter 6
NORWOOD, Chapter, 10, 36, pp. 111-118; 417-425.

VI. The Structure of the Methodist Episcopal Church

This class period deals with the episcopacy, “traveling elders,” the superintendency, the congregations, the class meetings, bands, and love feasts. Also discussed are Methodism’s *General Rules* and conference systems.

KINGHORN, Chapter 5.
NORWOOD, Chapters 11-12, 32, pp. 119-144; 363-380.

VII. Circuit Riders, Evangelism, & Church Growth*

The itinerant system and the circuit riders contributed immeasurably to development and rapid growth of the early Methodist Episcopal Church. This session looks at early Methodist evangelism and the nature of church growth.

KINGHORN, Chapters 4-5, 11, pp.51-76; 151-164

NORWOOD, Chapters 13-14, 23, pp. 145-163; 259-270. *This lecture will not be included

VIII. Methodism and Music

Methodism was a singing church. This lecture discusses Wesley’s first collection of hymns for American Methodism. Attention is given to the splendor of the Wesleyan hymns and the varieties of music used in Methodist worship during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A handout traces the various editions of hymnals in Methodism.

KINGHORN, Chapter 10.

IX. 1830: The Methodist Protestant Church

During the 1820s, debates swirled within Episcopal Methodism over lay representation in the conferences and over the power of the episcopacy. These issues led in 1830 to the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church--the first of several major schisms to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church. Attention is given to William S. Stockton and the *Mutual Rights* magazine. Early Methodist Protestant leaders are highlighted.

NORWOOD, Chapter 16, pp. 175-184.

X. Slavery, Schism, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South

Although Methodism began as an anti-slavery church, compromises eroded the church’s original stand. This lecture shows how northern and southern Methodism differed over slavery, the status of the episcopacy, and the power of General Conference. Differences led, in 1844, to a major schism in Episcopal Methodism and, in 1845, the formation of the M.E. Church, South.

NORWOOD, Chapter 17-18, pp. 185-209.

XI. 1843: The Wesleyan Methodist Church

Early tensions over slavery came to a head in 1843 with the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist “Connection.” This lecture focuses on Orange Scott the leader of the new denomination and Episcopal Methodism’s response to the slavery controversy.

XII. 1860: The Free Methodist Church

Disagreements over “holiness” led to the formation of the Free Methodist Church. This lecture deals with Benjamin T. Roberts and other members of the Genesee Conference who formed the Nazarite party and, eventually in 1860, the formation of the Free Methodist Church.

XIII. The Methodist Educational Enterprise

The class will study Methodism’s official sponsorship of education. Of special note are Methodism’s Sunday schools, academies, colleges, and theological seminaries. The lecture looks at Martin Ruter, the father of Methodist higher education, and John Dempster, the father of Methodist theological education.

KINGHORN, Chapter 8.

NORWOOD, Chapter 27, pp. 302-308.

XIV. Methodism and Publishing

From John Wesley’s “Christian Library” to United Methodism’s present-day publishing enterprises, the printed page has occupied an important place in the Methodist tradition. This lecture looks at books, authors, and publishing houses as they have developed and contributed to Methodism in America.

NORWOOD, Chapter 19-20, 27, pp. 210-238, 308-315.

XV. Methodism and the Black Communities

This lecture traces the contributions of Black Methodists. Of special importance are Richard Allen, the founder of the *African Methodist Episcopal Church*, William Stillwell and Ezekiel Cooper of the *African Methodist Zion Church*, and Peter Spencer, a leader of the *African Union Church* (originally, Union church of Africans).

KINGHORN, Chapter 7.

NORWOOD, Chapter 15, 24, pp. 164-174; 271-281.

XVI. American Methodist Missions*

Because the early American Methodists considered all circuit riders as “missionaries,” the church was slow to develop a Board of Missions. This lecture focuses on Episcopal Methodism’s work among the western frontier, the American Indians, and the Black communities. Special attention is given to the importance of Methodist women in establishing the church’s Missionary Society.

KINGHORN, Chapter 12, pp. 165-176.

NORWOOD, Chapter 25, 29, pp. 282-291; 330-340. *This lecture will not be included.

XVII. Methodism and Christian Perfection

This class period focuses on the Holiness Movement in American Methodism. Students will compare Wesley's teaching on Christian perfection with that of the evolving Holiness Movement. Attention is given to "holiness" camp meetings and the Holiness Movement's shifting attitudes toward the Methodist Episcopal Church.

NORWOOD, Chapter 26, pp. 292-301.

XVIII. Methodism and Women

This lecture focuses on the contributions of women to American Methodism. Throughout the history of American Methodism, women have outnumbered the men in church membership and in service. Of special interest is the long struggle for female lay delegates and for the ordination of women in Methodism.