

1-1-2001

CH 623 History of Methodism

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Kinghorn, Kenneth C., "CH 623 History of Methodism" (2001). *Syllabi*. Book 846.
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Asbury Theological Seminary

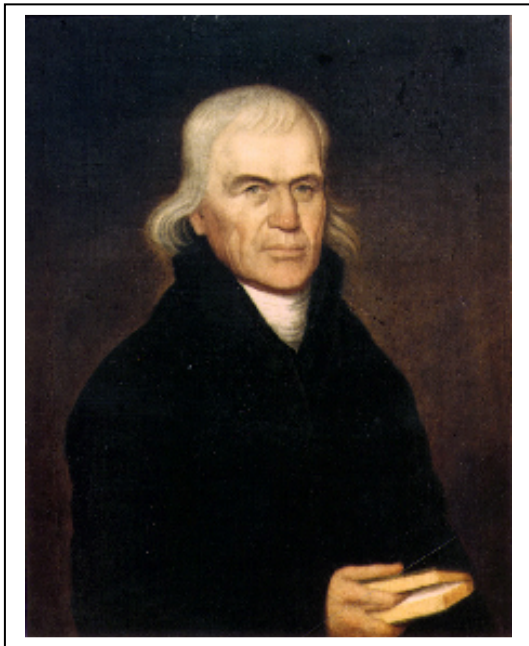
History of Methodism

CH 623

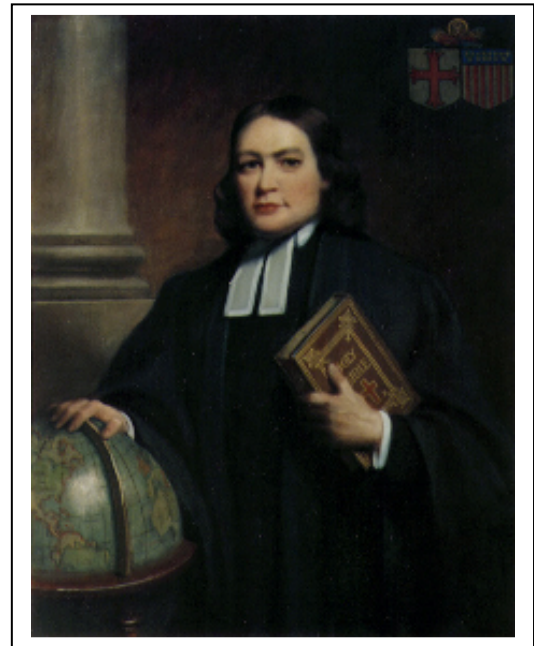
Two hours, Spring Term, 2001

Wednesday, 8:00-9:50 AM

Prof. Kinghorn



Francis Asbury
(1745-1816)



Thomas Coke
(1747-1814)

History of Methodism

CH 623, Spring Term, 2001, 2 hours
Professor 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 will be studied. One session each will be given to the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Free Methodist Church. As time permits, we will study the theological and institutional trends that have developed in twentieth-century American Methodism.

2. Learning Goals

- (1) To feel and appreciate the Methodist heritage, so that the student who is interested in Methodism understands that our generation lives on the growing edge of this important Christian tradition.
- (2) To acquire basic factual knowledge of persons, ideas, places, events, and movements that helped shape the history of American Methodism.
- (3) To comprehend the factors that motivated Methodism to develop its beliefs, practices, and structures and to grasp why, from time to time, the church modified them.
- (4) To understand the theological shifts that have taken 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 light 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*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.

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

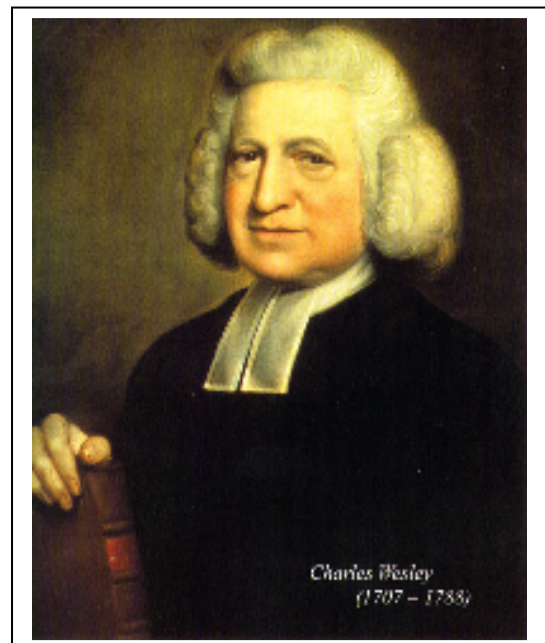
The professor's bibliography of Methodism has grown to more than 100 pages, and it is impractical to duplicate it for each class member. An excellent basic bibliographical source for seminarians and United Methodist pastors is Kenneth E. Rowe's book recommended above. It's in the bookstore. For book 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." The materials are arranged topically, and, as well, the volume contains an index of authors and editors as an aid to locating works by particular individuals. The list of current periodicals published by the worldwide family of Methodist churches is comprehensive.

6. Research project

I'm pleased to offer you the opportunity to have your research project count for the long run. Let me explain. I'm presently at work on a definitive volume titled *An Illustrated Dictionary of American Methodism*. This work will run to perhaps 1,400 pages, and it will contain pictures. Rather than have your research end up in a stack of old class project papers, I'm inviting you to become a part of this dictionary project by writing a dictionary article. Instructions for writing this piece appear below.

Of course, the major articles for the dictionary will be written by experts in the field (E.g. the articles on Francis Asbury, Thomas Coke, General Conference, the Judicial Council, the Methodist seminaries, etc.).

Students and scholars such as the members of this class will write the minor articles. Prior to publication, of course, I will edit your article and check it for accuracy. If your article requires



no little or no editing you may receive credit in the dictionary as a writer. *Above all, your article must be accurate, professional, and clearly written. Your dictionary article is due by December 8, 2000.*

Guidelines for writing the Dictionary Articles



John Wesley

nineteenth-century circuit rider will not need the length of coverage as, say, Thomas Coke.) You are writing a dictionary article, not a research paper. Therefore, do not use footnoting. With regard to 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'll find very 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 highly 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. In some cases, 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 be found elsewhere.

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 things you would want to find if you were consulting a dictionary for basic information about the person, event, doctrine, or institution that you are looking up. Length is not a critical factor. Aim for the best quality writing of which you are capable. A one-page paper of excellence is preferred over 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

Don't forget to consult early issues of the *Methodist Magazine* and the *Methodist Quarterly Review*. These are bound by the year—that is, the four quarterly issues of a given year are bound in a single volume. These journals are splendid resources for writing articles on individual persons. 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) and a 4-½ page eulogy of this man—both invaluable for writing a dictionary article about him. The engraving is of excellent quality, as were the majority of nineteenth-century engravings in Methodist journals.

No 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 was delighted to do so.

When possible, obtain a *high quality* photograph of your subject. Muddy reproductions from copy machines are not worth the bother. A photograph (using Kodak Royal Gold, ASA 100) 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 tends to distort 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 extant engravings were engraved from original color portraits. If you can locate 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 permitted 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. If not, document the source of the picture or engraving. I'll "shoot" it myself, and I need to know where it can be found. Sometimes, I've been able to obtain a nice 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 a page to four pages, plus the photograph and negative (if you can locate a clear picture). Provide a bibliography for your article. Please submit your article in hard copy and on a 3-½ inch HD disc using Microsoft Word for Windows. If you are unable to save your work in the MS Word for Windows format, ask the computer lab to format it in that form. Always identify on your disc the word processing program you are using.

Summary of Do's and Do Not's pertaining to 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 (if circumstances are known) or the date of the founding of the institution you are writing about. 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 Spottsylvania, 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 are writing.
- ☐ Do use MS Word and Times New Roman 12-point type. Some word processing programs cannot be converted to MS Word. Asbury Seminary's computer lab, for example, is unable to retrieve text composed on ancient Apple software and other seldom used programs.
- ☐ 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 pertinent to your articles. *However, do not include references to other dictionary articles.* Your short bibliography should contain only primary sources, autobiographies, biographies, and monographs. If your article is on an institution, it is appropriate to include the history(s) of that institution, if one exists (in print or out of print).
- ☐ Do include a high quality photograph of a picture or engraving and its source.
- ☐ Do clearly label your disc.

DO NOT:

- ☐ Do not use footnoting. Your dictionary piece is not a term paper; it is an article.

- ☐ Do not use bold print to highlight cross-referenced topics.
- ☐ Do not send discs that contain a virus or are otherwise corrupted.
- ☐ Do not include poor quality photographs of the person, building, or graphic you are using.
- ☐ Do not copy sentences from other dictionaries
- ☐ Do not use trite or meaningless phrases, such as, “She was a great woman,” “He did a lot for the church,” or “We shall remember this conference for all the good that it did.” Rather, state specifically the accomplishments or achievements of the person or institution featured in your article.

In a separate document, I am enclosing topics from which you can choose to write. Those topics that are shaded have already been dealt with, therefore do not choose to write on a topic that is shaded. As stated above, I’m asking you write one dictionary article. You may choose your subject (person, organization, institution, or concept) from a master list of topics that I will provide.

5. Examination schedule and grading

Each of the three tests will be weighted toward subjects covered in the particular segment of the course being tested. However, you will need continuously to review material covered in previous lectures. For example, some material from the first third of the semester may appear on the test for the second third of the semester. If in rare cases—such as sickness, funerals, or interviews with a Conference Board of Ordained Ministry—a student must miss a test, it is important to notify the professor ahead of the examination date and arrange to take the test. Examinations will be on these dates:

Test #1 March 7
Test #2 April 4
Test #3 Exam Week

Eighty percent of the final grade will be based on the three examinations, and twenty percent of the final grade will be based on your dictionary article. Prepare your dictionary article to the exact standards listed above. It would please me enormously to be able to attach your name to your article in the forthcoming dictionary.



Philip William Otterbein
(1726-1813)



Jacob Albright
(1759-1808)

CH 623, History of Methodism

Lecture Outline

I. The Marks of a Treasured Past

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 how primitive Methodism responded to the challenges and opportunities of the times.

KINGHORN, Chapter 1, pp. 7-20.

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, pp. 21-36,

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, pp. 37-50.

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, pp. 77-87.

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. Also, 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, pp. 87-92

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, pp. 65-76

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.

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, pp. 139-150.

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, pp. 109-124.

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*, and 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, pp. 93-108.

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.

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. 1939: The Formation of the Methodist Church

In 1939 three denominations--the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church--joined to form the Methodist Church. The almost 95 years of union discussions brought to the surface the concerns, weaknesses, and strengths of each of the three branches of Methodism. This session looks at the adjustments in denominational polity, which came about as a result of the years of merger talks.

NORWOOD, Chapter 35, pp. 406-416.

XIX. Women and Methodism

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 (attained in 1956).

XX. The Evolution of Methodist Polity

This session deals with changes in the Discipline, particularly as they affect the episcopacy, lay representation, and the conference structures. Due to time constraints, this lecture may be deleted from the class sessions.

NORWOOD, Chapter 2-22, pp. 239-258.

XXI. Methodism and Social Issues

From Methodism's beginning under John Wesley, the movement has insisted on the application of the gospel to the social needs of humankind. This lecture traces Methodism and social issues and ends with the development of Methodism's *Social Principles* in 1908.

NORWOOD, Chapter 30, 34, pp. 341-354; 391-405.

XXII. Methodist Worship and Preaching

This session deals with the history of worship in the Methodist tradition. Of special interest is the legacy of Anglican liturgy, the evolution of liturgy in American Methodism, and preaching in the Methodist tradition.

KINGHORN, Chapter 9, pp. 125-138.

XXIII. New Directions in Methodist Theology

This class period examines the major shifts that have taken place in Methodism. Of special interest are orthodoxy, Liberal Evangelicalism, Evangelical Liberalism, The Social Gospel, Personalism, Neo-orthodoxy, Existentialism, radical theologies, liberation theologies, and process theology.

NORWOOD, Chapter 28, 33, pp. 316-329; 381-390.

XXIV. Methodism and the Ecumenical Movement

This lecture focuses on the church in ecumenical theological dialogue. Attention is given to the World Methodist Conference, Methodist theological consultations, the National Convocation of Methodist Theological faculties, and the Oxford Institutes.

Norwood, Chapter 31, 38, pp. 355-362; 437-442.

XXV. Evangelical Renewal Influences.

This lecture surveys such movements as the Methodist League for Faith and Life (1925), the Good News Movement (1966), the Charismatic Movement (1970s), the Wesleyan Theological Society, and other efforts to renew the church from an evangelical perspective. Attention is also given to the place of orthodox scholarship in the academy and in the pulpit.

XXVI. 1968: The United Methodist Church

This lecture details the union of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, which became the United Methodist Church.

XXVII. Pluralism and Methodism's Theological Tradition

The 1908 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted that the bishops no longer had the responsibility to monitor the doctrinal directions of the church's theological schools. Following this action, the Course of Study was changed significantly, and Methodism moved into new theological paradigms. This lecture traces these developments and their effects on the church.

NORWOOD, Chapter 37, pp. 426-436.

XXVIII. Special Interest Groups and United Methodism

This lecture focuses on the church's 1972 decision to become an "inclusive church." This new direction was anticipated by the rise of special interest groups and caucuses. The class will examine Gay and Lesbian Caucuses (1964), Black Methodists for Church Renewal (1968), the Commission of Religion and Race (1968), the Commission of Status and Role of Women (1970), the American Indian Caucus (1970), the Asian-American Caucus (1971), MARCHA--Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans (1971), and the U. M. Women's Caucus (1971).