Welcome to Confirmation Class

Confirm Series: Lessons 8-11

As we wait to begin, take a moment to review our goals and expectations for class:

Lesson Goals

As a result of this lesson, I will be able to…

- Explore John Wesley's personal history and how it influenced him to start the Methodist movement.
- Discover more about the history of the Methodist church in the United States.
- Explore the history of Kingswood and the changes through the years.

Class Expectations

- WORK HARD
- BE KIND

For Fun!

Be ready to share one with the group:

- Would you rather be able to speak any language or speak to animals?
- Which is your favorite meal…breakfast, lunch, or dinner?
- What was the best part of your week? What was a low from the week?

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8

Tentative Agenda

Welcome/Opening Prayer

Lesson 8: Wesley and the Methodists

Lesson 9: The Growth of Methodism

Break/Snack

Lesson 10: The Local Church

Lesson 11: The Connection

Wrap Up/Closing

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, we gather today with hearts open to learning and growing in faith. As we explore the life of John Wesley, help us see how his journey with You ignited a movement that continues to touch lives around the world. Guide us in understanding the roots of the Methodist Church and its history in the United States. May we be inspired by the faith of those who came before us and seek to live boldly for You today. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Unit 2: Our History and Heritage

Lesson 8: Wesley and the Methodists

The Christmas Conference

The first General Conference that founded the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was held in Baltimore, Maryland.

It happened on December 24, 1784.

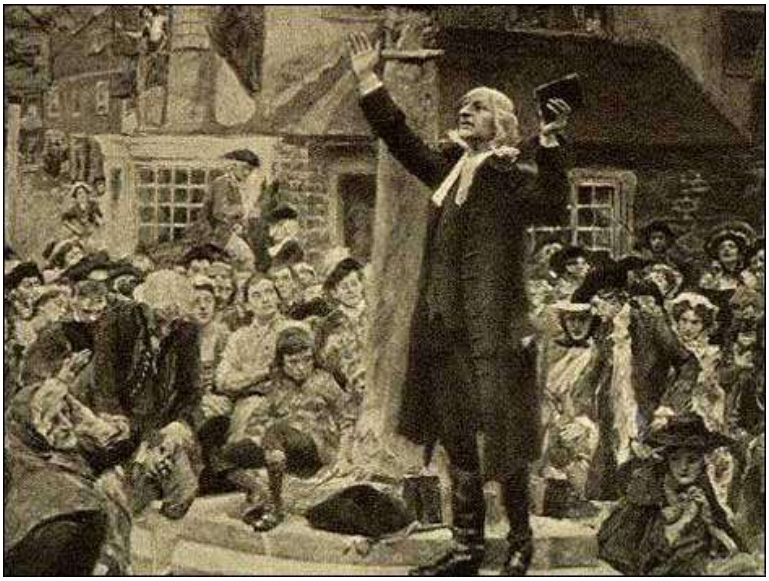


https://um-insight.net/in-the-church/umc-global-nature/the-christmas-conference-10-days-that-started-a-church/
https://www.umc.org/en/content/methodist-history-the-christmas-conference

The Aldersgate Experience

The moment when John Wesley felt his heart “strangely warmed” by God. It occurred at a meeting on Aldersgate Street in London.

It happened on May 24, 1738.



https://www.umc.org/en/content/holy-spirit-moments-learning-from-wesley-at-aldersgate

HOLY CLUB

The group started by John and Charles Wesley at Oxford where members dedicated themselves to living a holy life.



https://www.umc.org/en/content/the-method-of-early-methodism-the-oxford-holy-club

CIRCUIT RIDERS

Ministers who rode around on horseback and preached to a lot of churches. Francis Asbury was one of the first circuit riders.



https://www.umc.org/en/content/the-hard-road-of-a-methodist-circuit-rider

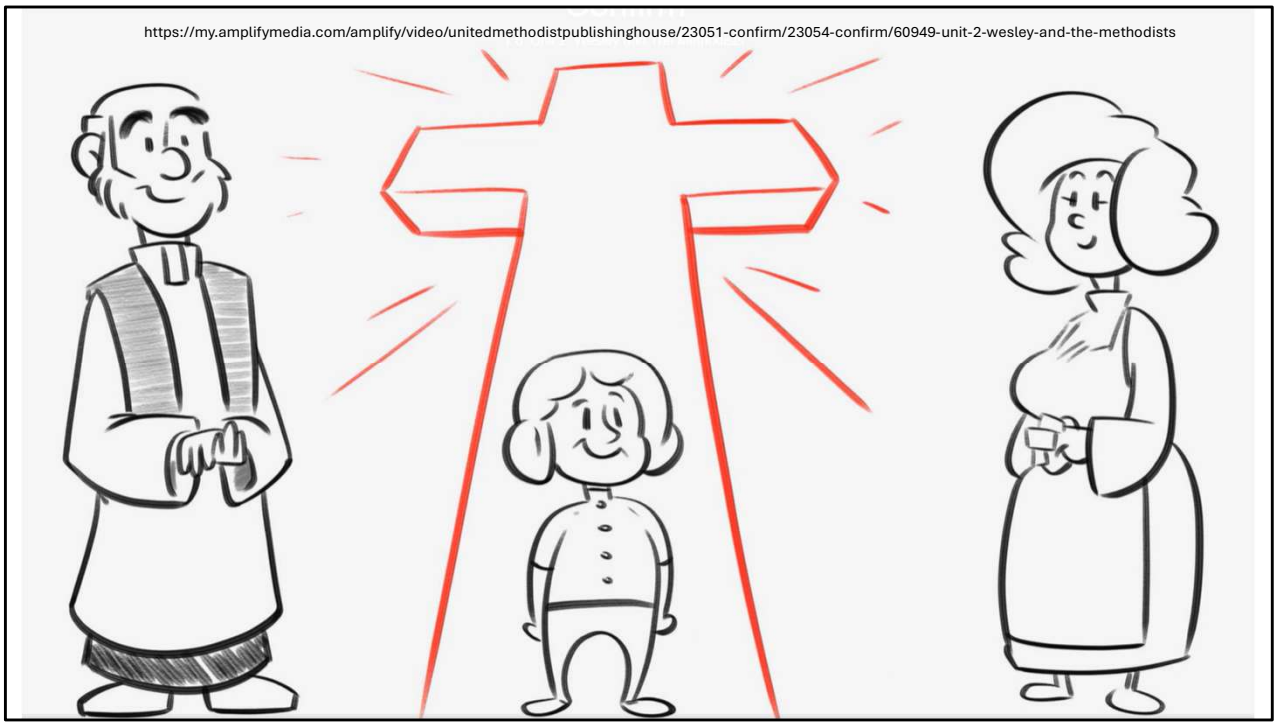
KINGSWOOD SCHOOL

Wesley founded Kingswood School to educate the children of colliers, emphasizing the importance of education within Methodism's social mission.

The first school was in the forest outside of the King's castle, the King's woods in Bath, Somerset (England).



https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-was-the-first-school-started-by-methodists
https://www.kingswood.bath.sch.uk/why-kingswood-/about-the-school



Wesley video

- The founder of the Methodist movement was John Wesley, an English priest in the 1700s who focused a lot of his work on the ideas of holiness and God's grace.

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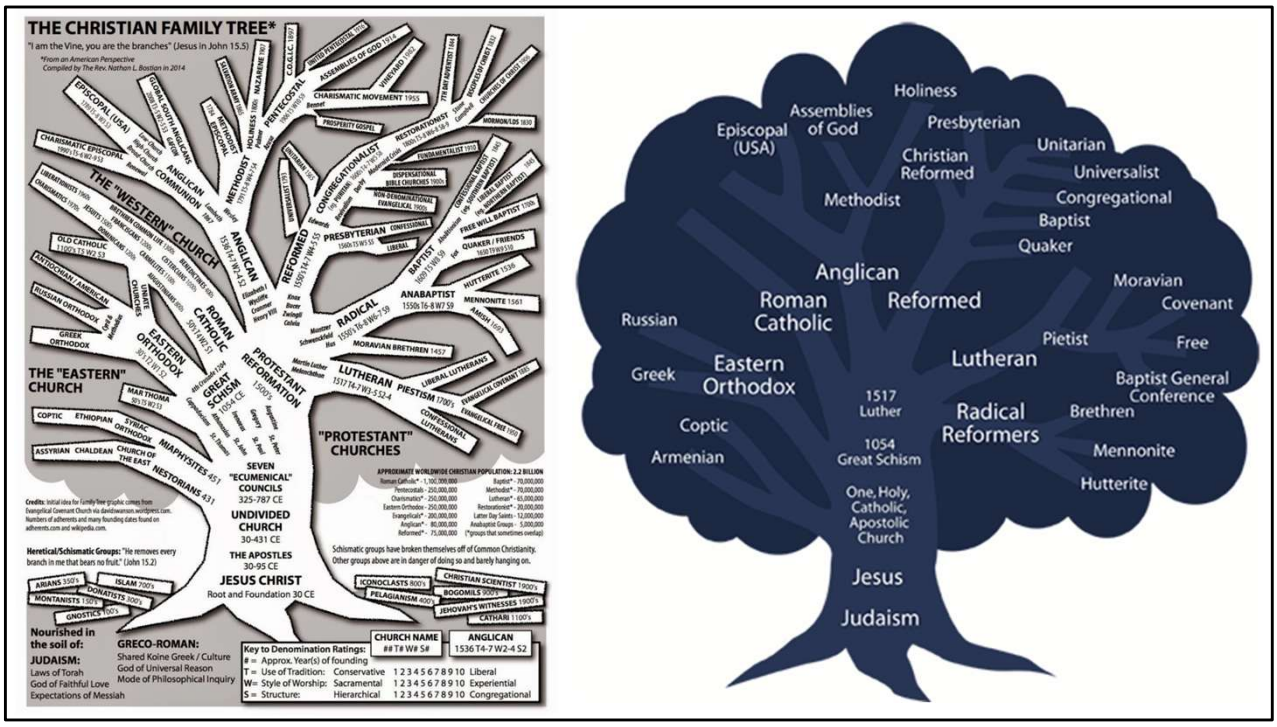


Start of Methodism (Christian family tree)

- Let's explore more about how Methodism fits into the Christian "family tree" and how it grew and spread to the United States.
    - Take a few moments to show where Methodism is on the two images and where other familiar religions are in comparison

Unit 2: Our History and Heritage

Lesson 9: The Growth of Methodism

Methodist on the Frontier	African-American Methodist Churches	German Methodists	The Church Splits (northern/ southern)	The Church Reunites in 1939
Women in the Church	Segregation in the Church (The Central Jurisdiction)	Social Justice	Lay Leadership	Education (Methodist schools)

Important events in Methodism intro

- There are a lot of stories and events that went into the formation of The United Methodist Church.
    - Just like you have important moments in your life, some of these stories are powerful moments that the church wants to remember and some moments we would rather forget.
    - It's important though, that we remember the good and the bad so that we can keep doing good and remember the consequences of when we do something bad.
- Going through all of this information can be overwhelming.
    - The purpose isn't to memorize or become Methodist experts in one session but rather to learn that our history is complex and full of ups and downs, which helps us better understand where we have come from to see more of where we want to go.

Methodists on the Frontier

Q: What was the name given to these preachers who rode around from church to church and town to town?

a) Traveling ministers

b) Circuit riders

c) Parish missionaries



- Methodist on the Frontier
  - As the frontier went west, so did Methodism. Preachers who rode on horseback to many churches and towns went with pioneers. They preached, held revivals, started classes, and planted new churches in almost every new town. Methodist pastors and Methodist churches seemed to be everywhere. Francis Asbury was among the first of these preachers, but he was far from the last.
    - Q: What was the name given to these preachers who rode around from church to church and town to town?
    - A: Circuit riders

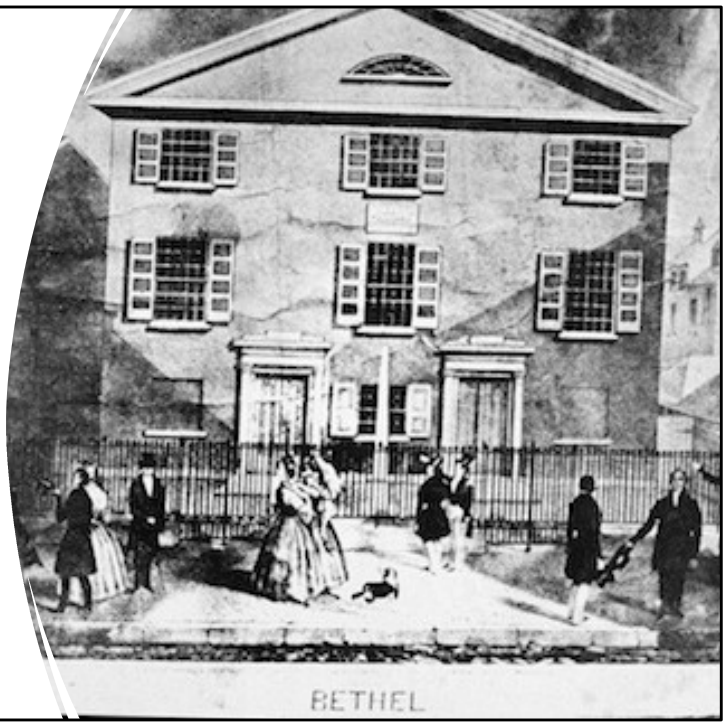
African-American Methodist Churches

Q: Which denomination was **founded first** by African American Methodists in the 1800s?

a) The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

b) The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

c) The African Methodist Episcopal Church



- African-American Methodist Churches
  - In the 1800s, as our country struggled with slavery, numerous African American Methodists experienced discrimination in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Many broke off and started their own Methodist denominations. These churches still exist. They are separate denominations but still part of our Methodist family. In numerous ways, these denominations and the United Methodist Church work together. Together, they are called Pan-Methodists.
    - Q: What is one of the three denominations created by African American Methodists in the 1800s?
    - A: The African Methodist Episcopal Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion, and The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

German Methodists

Q: What was the name of the new church created by The Evangelical Association and the United Brethren in Christ?

a) The Evangelical Church of the United States

b) The Evangelical United Brethren

c) The United Evangelical Church



- German Methodists
  - During the early years, as Methodism was getting organized, there were numerous German-speaking people who were Methodists. Mainly due to language reason, they did not join The Methodist Episcopal Church. Instead, they formed their own churches: The Evangelical Association and The United Brethren in Christ. Later these churches united and formed a new church. In 1968, this new church united with The Methodist Church, creating the United Methodist Church.
    - Q: What was the name of the new church created by The Evangelical Association and the United Brethren in Christ?
    - A: The Evangelical United Brethren

The Church Splits

Q: In what year did the church split into a northern and southern church?

a) 1805

b) 1844

c) 1961



- The Church Splits
  - In the years leading up to the Civil War, the church split into three major denominations. First, the United Methodist Protestant Church broke off over several issues, including the role of laypersons and bishops. Then several years before the Civil War, the church split over slavery becoming a northern church (The Methodist Episcopal Church) and a southern church (The Methodist Episcopal Church, South).
    - Q: In what year did the church split into a northern and southern church?
    - A: 1844

The Church Reunites

Q: In what year did the three branches of Methodism reunite to form The Methodist Church?

a) 1939

b) 1975

c) 2001



- The Church Reunites
  - After the end of the Civil War, it took a long time for the three branches of Methodism that had split apart before the war to come back together. When they did, they formed The Methodist Church. Then in 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church united to form the United Methodist Church.
    - Q: In what year did the three branches of Methodism reunite to form The Methodist Church?
    - A: 1939

Segregation in the Church

Q: What was the name of the jurisdiction created by The Methodist Church to keep black churches segregated?

a) The Western Jurisdiction
b) The Central Jurisdiction
c) The Racial Division Conference



- Segregation in the Church
  - After the three branches of Methodism reunited to form The Methodist Church in 1939, they arranged the annual conferences into five jurisdictions based on geography. However, they also segregated the black churches into a separate jurisdiction totally unrelated to the geographical location of the church. Black Methodists rightly saw the creation of this segregated jurisdiction as a betrayal and contrary to the mission of The Methodist Church and movement. But change did not come quickly. In 1956, the Church softened their policy, but the segregated jurisdiction was not eliminated entirely until the merger with the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968.
    - Q: What was the name of the jurisdiction created by The Methodist Church to keep black churches segregated?
    - A: The Central Jurisdiction

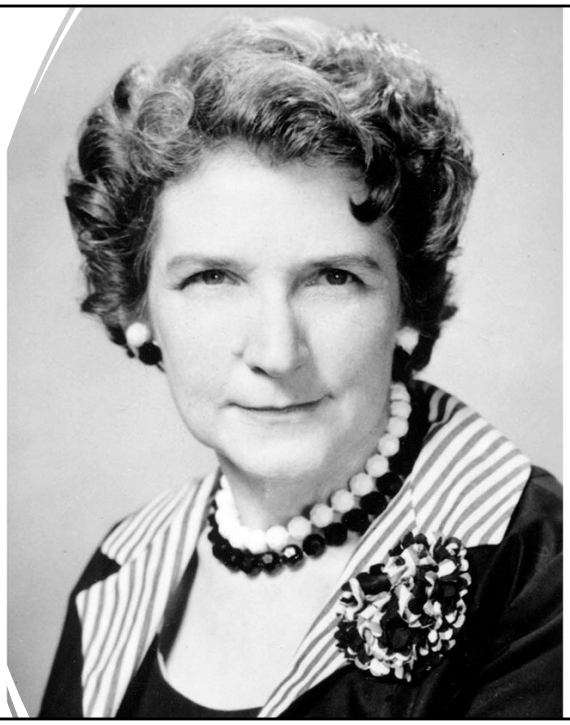
Women

Q: Who was the first women to be ordained as clergy in The Methodist Church?

a) Anna Howard Shaw

b) Maud Keister Jensen

c) Frances Willard



- Women
  - Women played a vital role in the Methodist movement from the very beginning. Susanna Wesley, John and Charles's mother, was the primary religious influence in their early life. John Wesley even permitted women as lay preachers, a move that was both uncharacteristic and controversial for his time. In 1889, the United Brethren in Christ ordained a woman as a pastor. Years later, in 1956, The Methodist Church became the first large denomination to ordain women as clergy. Women were also vitally important in missions and social justice work in the late 1800s and early 1900s.
    - Q: Who was the first women to be ordained as clergy in The Methodist Church?
    - A: Maud Keister Jensen
- https://www.umc.org/en/content/timeline-of-women-in-methodism

Social Justice

Q: What is the name of the document that outlines The United Methodist Church's position on different social issues?

a) The Social Principles

b) The Book of Discipline

c) The Methodist Creed



- Social Justice
  - From the very beginning, the Wesleys and the other early Methodists were involved in the social issues of the day. The visited in prisons and jails, they cared for the sick, they opposed slavery (which is one reason why the history of the church is so troublesome), and they fought to keep children from working in the coal mines. As society changes, new issues emerge, and The United Methodist Church continues to respond to these changing issues…even if it is slow to make progress. For a church to take stands on controversial issues was surprising in 1908, when our church wrote its first Social Creed. Then, just this year, in May 2024, the church's governing body marked a new era of LGBTQ inclusion by voting to lift the bans on LGBTQ clergy and on pastors performing same-sex unions. They also removed the language that said homosexuality was "incompatible with Christian teaching".
    - Q: What is the name of the document that outlines The United Methodist Church's position on different social issues?
    - A: The Social Principles (and it's supposed to be updated every 4 years but with the pandemic, it was 6 years ago)

Lay Leadership

Q: What does the word "lay" mean in The United Methodist Church?

a) Someone who volunteers occasionally
b) Someone who is not ordained but is baptized and confirmed
c) Someone in training to become clergy



- Lay Leadership
  - From the beginning, laypersons were key to the Methodist movement. Wesley was an ordained priest in the Church of England, but he could get few other pastors to join him in the movement. What he did find were lots of eager laypeople. Lay preachers and lay leaders gave the movement its momentum. Today, General Conference, the governing body of our denomination, is 50% laypersons and 50% ordained clergy in membership. Laypersons have as much right as clergy to submit legislation and ideas to General Conference. In The United Methodist Church, all baptized persons are ministers. Some are ordained; but all are ministers of the gospel. You are a minister of the gospel.
    - Q: What does the word lay mean in the context? What does someone need to do to become a layperson in The United Methodist Church?
    - A: Lay means someone who is not ordained. To become a layperson in the UMC, someone must be baptized and confirmed.

Education

Q: As of October 2026, approximately how many educational institutions does the UMC support?

a) 95

b) 106

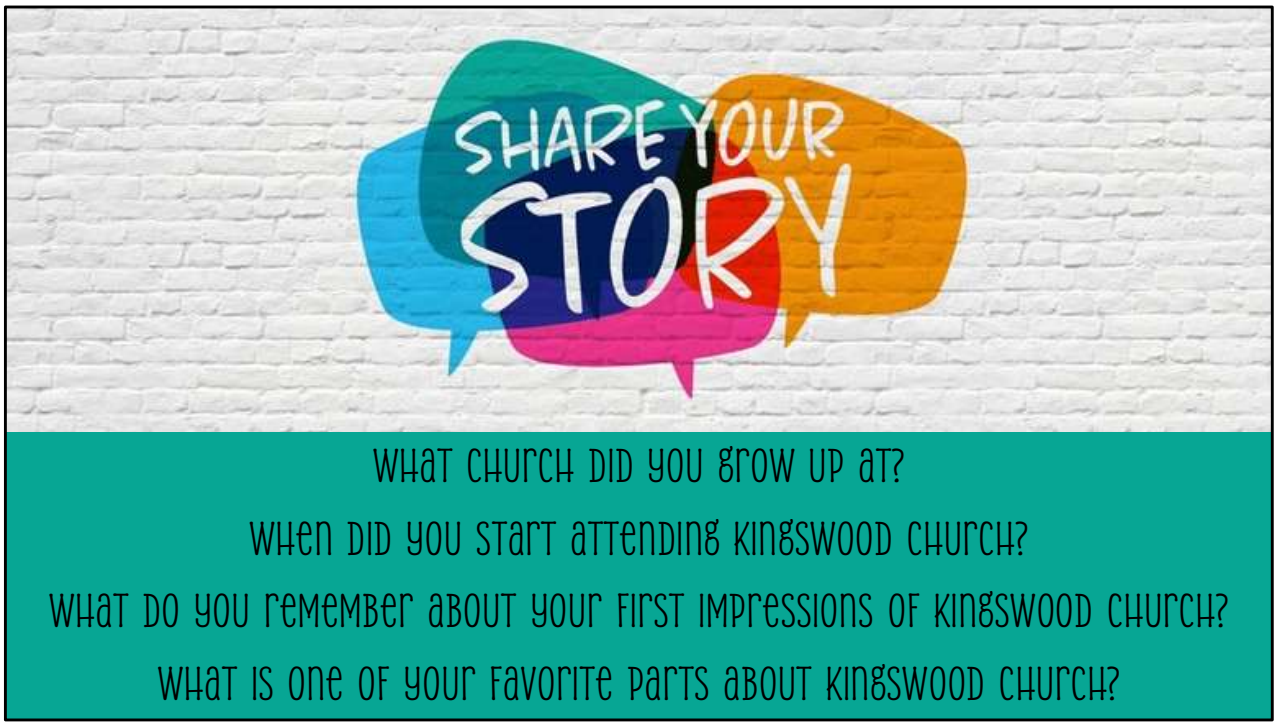
c) 125



- Education
  - John Wesley was a scholar. He believed in education, in books, and in learning. From the beginning, Methodists started schools everywhere they went. Methodism was active in the Sunday school movement in the 1700s, originally started to teach impoverished children to read. Today, the UMC supports a number of colleges, universities, special schools, and seminaries.
    - Q: How many educational institutions does the UMC support? Name one of them.
    - A: 106 (as of October 2026)
- Cokesbury College founded in 1787 in Maryland, no longer there
- More than 1,500 over time (closed, merged, changed affiliations), at most 200 at a time
  - Boston University, Duke, Emory, Syracuse, North Central College in Naperville, Wesleyan near ISU (but is now more independently operated)
- https://www.gbhem.org/education/students/schools-colleges-universities/
- https://www.gbhem.org/education/education-naamscu/naamscu-directory-of-schools/

Unit 2: Our History and Heritage

Lesson 10:
The Local Church



Share Your Story

- Over the last few sessions, we have discussed the growth and development of the church as a worldwide institution, but today we are going to focus on this church in particular and how it came to be a part of that larger story.
- Before we get into the story of how this church began and how its changed over the years, let's talk about your personal story as a part of this church.
- All of our stories are part of the same story of our congregation!

Kingswood Buffalo Grove campus

- The Northern Illinois Conference Board of Missions and the First Methodist Church of Arlington Heights saw a need for a new church in the Buffalo Grove and Wheeling area.
  - The Board of Missions purchased six acres of land, including a stone house and a frame machine shop for the purpose of using it to organize a new Methodist congregation.
- In June 1963, Clark Holt was appointed as the organizing pastor.
  - 75 persons attended the first worship service on September 8, 1963 with the support of First Church in Arlington Heights.
  - Most of the preparation of the machine shed for worship was done by prospective members of the newly emerging congregation.
- We were then chartered on April 12, 1964, as an official Methodist congregation.
  - It became fully self-supporting by January 1, 1967.
- We later adopted the name of Kingswood, a school started by John Wesley, founder of Methodism, for children of miners and Methodist preachers in Bristol, England.
  - **After the denominational merger in 1968, we then became Kingswood United Methodist Church.**





Kingswood Buffalo Grove campus

- Because of steady growth, a new building was built and opened in September of 1969.
  - This building included:
    - A sanctuary for 250 people
    - Pastor's study
    - Church office
    - Nursery
    - Kitchen
    - Washrooms
    - The Fireside Room
- Growth continued and more space was needed. In September of 1978, a building addition was completed.
  - This included:
    - Six classrooms
    - Music room
    - Two offices
    - Kitchen
    - Gymnasium (Activity Center)
    - Sanctuary seating was increased to 350
- In 1980, Grace UMC of Prairie View was linked to Kingswood.
  - They later merged into Kingswood and the facility was sold
- In 1997-98, another addition was added.
  - This included:
    - 11 classrooms
    - Renovations of the sanctuary and Fireside Room
    - New hallways



Kingswood Buffalo Grove campus

Fast Facts

- Manna House is the original farmhouse
  - This used to be where the pastor lived!
- 32 names were considered before deciding on Kingswood
  - This honors the Kingswood Children's School that John Wesley started in 1748 in Bristol, England
- Senior pastors include:
  - 1963-71: Reverand Clark Holt
  - 1971-73: Reverand Charles Klosterman
  - 1973-84: Reverand Steve Dahl
  - 1984-87: Reverand Jim Conner
  - 1984-92: Reverand Harry Nicol
  - 1992-2005: Reverand Richard Oliver
  - 2005-12: Reverand Margaret Gramley
  - 2012-current: Reverand James Preston
- The labyrinth was created in 2011







Kingswood Deerfield campus

- Started as Bethlehem Evangelical Church by a German circuit rider in 1861
  - 33 circuit riders went to this area from 1861-1921 for the Evangelical Association
- 1861-1946: Bethlehem Evangelical Church
- 1946-1968: The Bethlehem Evangelical United Brethren Church
  - Current sanctuary was built in 1951
  - Current education wing and office built in 1961
- 1968-2023: Christ United Methodist Church
- 2023-current: Kingswood United Methodist Church



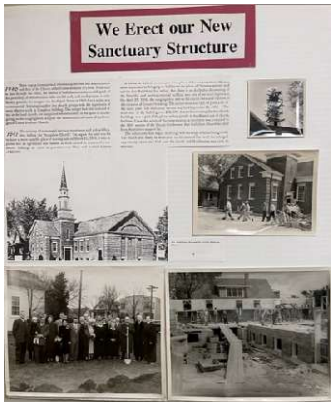


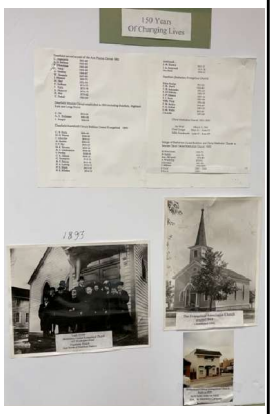


Kingswood Deerfield campus









Kingswood Deerfield campus

Fast Facts

- Senior pastors include:
  - 1861-1947: No record of pastors found
  - 1947-1955: Reverand Francis Guither
  - 1955-1968: Reverand Eugene Wykle
  - 1968-1970: Reverand John Bouldin
  - 1970-1975: Reverand Donnell Jenkins
  - 1975-1989: Reverand Chub Weatherby
  - 1989-1995: Reverand Steve Howland
  - 1995-2001: Reverand Jamie Williams
  - 2001-2009: Reverand Christian Coon
  - 2009-2017: Reverand Brian Roots
  - 2017-2020: Reverand Norval Brown
  - 2020-2023: Reverand Esther Lee
  - 2023-current: Reverand Clayton Edwards
- The former youth space is nicknamed “The Cave”

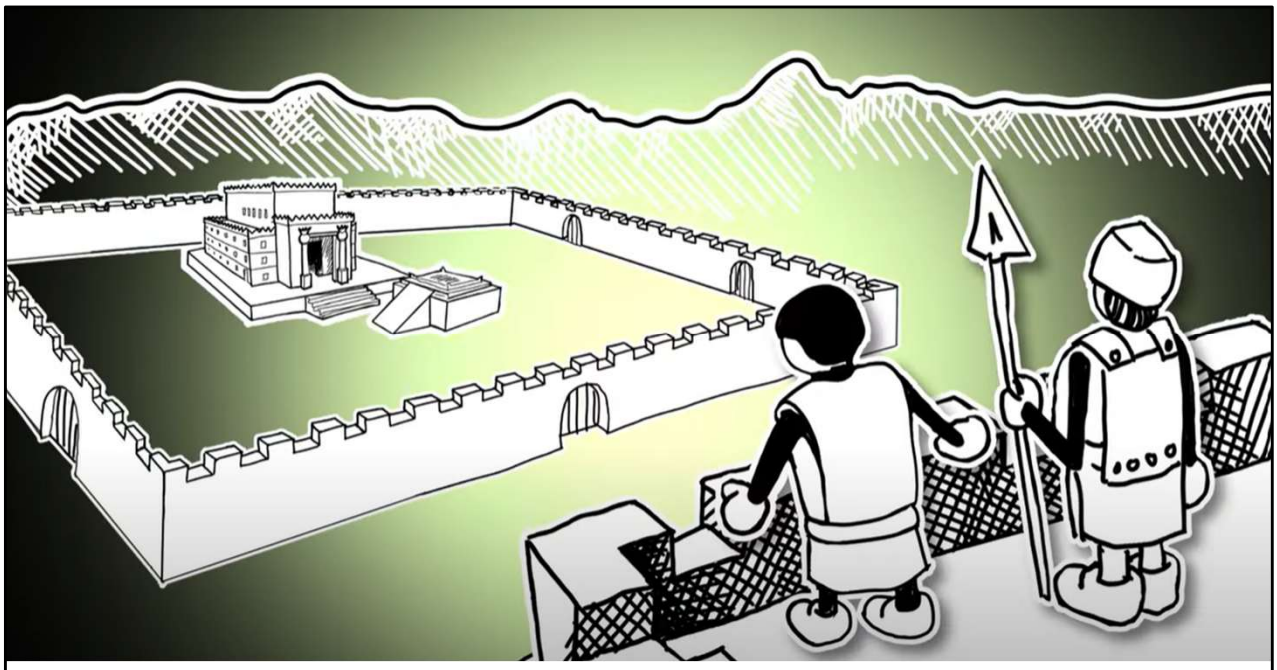






Unit 3: Our Life Together

Lesson 11:
The Connection



How do the puzzle activity and the Book of Nehemiah go together? What is their connection?

Nehemiah video

- Nehemiah, following the structure and guidance from God to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem: https://youtu.be/KJokkRQ1eBk?si=S4wzYg5cWB4s54L3
- **Structure, vision, and guidance**
    - **1. Nehemiah's Vision and Leadership:**
        - In the Book of Nehemiah, Nehemiah had a clear vision from God to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He didn't just randomly start building—he had a plan, gave people specific tasks, and organized the work so it could be done efficiently, even when there were challenges from opponents. His leadership provided **clear guidance** on how the work should be done.
        - Without Nehemiah's leadership, the people wouldn't have known where to start, and the rebuilding might have been chaotic or incomplete. They needed a **big picture** (a vision) to know how to proceed.
        - This fits with where we are going in our upcoming lessons, we will be exploring the goals and instructions of the Methodist Church and how we are where we are because of those directions.

Wrap-Up

Confirm Series: Lessons 8-11

As we wrap up class, let's go over a few things together:

Objective

The objective of class today was…

- Explore John Wesley's personal history and how it influenced him to start the Methodist movement.
- Discover more about the history of the Methodist church in the United States.
- Explore the history of Kingswood and the changes through the years.

Application

Today's lesson is important to me because…

Closing Prayer

One confirmand will lead us in a closing prayer.

Upcoming Dates

- October 17
  - HarvestFest volunteer opportunity (10-2p)
- October 18
  - Sunday Night Live (5-7p)
- October 24-25
  - Youth Fall Retreat
  - SIGN UP TODAY!!!!!!!!!!!
- October 25
  - ~~Mentor Meet Up~~ *(moving to Nov. 8)*
  - Confirmation Class
- November 1
  - SNL
- November 8
  - Mentor Meet Up
  - Confirmation Class
- November 13
  - Feed My Starving Children