

# Lutherans and Other Denominations

## Brethren and Union Churches

### Welcome and Opening Prayer

Brethren = Less than 300K in around 7 groups

American descendants of German Protestants = Ex-Lutherans in 1700s who disliked formal worship  
Pietists (similar to Puritans) = Inner spiritual life (piety) built from prayer, Bible study & Christian fellowship  
Emphasize spirit of God within and binding love = Not strong on doctrine

Church of the Brethren (Dunkers) = Largest current group with around 125K

Alexander Mack (1679-1735) = From Reformed Church, mingled with Anabaptism & Pietism (like Puritans)  
1708 - Founded *Community of Believers* in Schwarzenau, Germany  
1720s - Group migrated to America to flee persecution  
German Mennonites = Also called German Baptist Brethren or Dunkers  
Focus on complete freedom in all religious matters = No creeds, Will not go to war or pledge allegiance  
Complete obedience = Simple life, avoid evil, total abstinence  
Ordinances (Like Sacraments)  
Believer's Baptism = Triple immersion  
Complete Lord's Supper = Foot washing (servanthood), Full meal (family), Bread & Cup (Saviorhood)  
Anoint the sick and dying, Lay hands on Christian workers

### Church of the United Brethren in Christ

William Otterbein (1726-1813) = Reformed minister in Germany, Sent as missionary to America  
1754 - Converted to Arminianism = Began to conduct revival meetings  
German Methodists - Strict Arminian = *salvation is offered to all men of whatever faith or religion*  
Language differences stopped merger with Methodist Church in 1700s  
1946 - Most merged with Evangelical Church = Became Evangelical United Brethren Church  
1968 - EUBC merged into United Methodist Church  
Around 36K in CUBC today = *Scriptural living* required, Forbids alcohol and tobacco

Society of Friends (Quakers) = Around 100K in US

Stemmed from English Puritan Movement  
George Fox (1624-1690) = Englishman, Had religious experience at 11 years old, Had a vision in 1652  
*Inner Light* = God is in man, therefore man can know God without the scriptures  
Scriptures are past revelations = Don't substitute for Spirit's Inner Light to an individual  
Every person is a walking church = Members refused to go to church or pay taxes for state clergy  
War and oaths prohibited by Sermon on the Mount  
Called *Quakers* when Fox told a judge to "tremble at the word of the Lord"  
1691 - William Penn (succeeded Fox) received charter for colony = Many Quakers fled to Pennsylvania  
  
Worship = No organized order, Members speak as they are called by the Spirit, All members at same level  
No liturgy, no ordained ministers, no sacraments = Usually called meetings, not worship  
Monthly business meetings = Frank inquiry into members' conduct  
No true Quaker smokes, drinks, gambles, plays the stock market, buys lottery tickets

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Restoration Movement - 1800s

Attempt to **restore** *one, holy, catholic and apostolic church* = Non-denominational and non-creedal focus  
*In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love.*

James O'Kelly (1757-1826) = Methodist minister in Virginia, Protested episcopal hierarchy and power  
1792 - Republican Methodist Church = Founded by O'Kelly and 8000 ex-Methodists  
Bible is only rule and discipline, Only Christian character needed for membership

Abner Jones (1772-1841) = Baptist minister in Vermont, Protested 5 points of Calvinism  
Bible Only = Rejected creeds, denominational names, Trinity, deity of Christ  
1801 - First Christian Church at Lyndon, Vermont = Stressed freedom of religious thought  
Created *General Convention of Christian Churches* (Unitarian Baptists)  
1811 - Formed union with O'Kelly's Republican Methodist Church

Barton Stone (1772-1844) = Presbyterian minister in Kentucky, Favored Arminianism (Presbyterian was Calvinist)  
Believed Christians could & should unite on basis of simple faith in Christ = Doctrines should be abolished  
Organized 1801 Cane Ridge Revival = Included Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist leaders  
Deeds are more important than creeds, Many attendees left denominations and formed *Christians*  
Congregations autonomous, lay people independent

Six Basic Christian Principles = Conferences of groups under O'Kelly, Jones and Stone  
Christ = The only head of the Church  
The Bible = Sufficient rule of faith and practice  
Christian Character = The measure of membership  
Scripture = Life to be based on a right, individual interpretation  
Christian = The name of worthy followers of Christ  
Unity = Christians working together to save the world

Thomas Campbell (1763-1854) = Presbyterian minister in Ireland, Moved to Pennsylvania in 1807  
1809 - Suspended for having open communion = Pushed for close relationships with all Christians  
Formed *Christian Association of Washington County, Pa*  
Published *Declaration and Address* = Became "magna carta" for *Disciples*, Main points:  
Christian unity, Congregations independent, No creeds, Salvation only by obedience  
*Where the Scripture speaks, we speak. Where the Scripture is silent, we are silent.*

Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) = Presbyterian minister in Ireland, Joined father's work in 1810  
Stressed individual faith, no creeds, weekly Lord's Supper, believer's baptism by immersion  
Disciples of Christ - Believers grouped by Campbell = Drew numerous Baptists

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) = Around 750K in US

1832 - Stone's *Christians* merged with Campbell's *Disciples*  
Campbell was trinitarian, Stone was unitarian = Unity is more important than doctrine  
Began as Perfectionists and Pentecostals = Gradually went in two directions, split around 1900  
"Progressive" stayed as *Disciples*; "Conservative" became *Churches of Christ*  
1968 - Adopted a constitution = Many left since this essentially created a formal denomination  
*Christian Churches and Churches of Christ* = Independent churches that left  
Anti-creedal; No specific doctrine; Basically Arminian = Instruction is Trinitarian but Unitarian beliefs are okay  
Ordinances = Not called sacraments; Required because Christ commanded them  
Believer's Baptism (immersion only) and Lord's Supper (every Sunday)

*Class materials are available at [www.biblestoriesforadults.com/denominations](http://www.biblestoriesforadults.com/denominations)*

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Churches of Christ = Around 1.5MM in US, Largest of three main Restoration groups

1906 - Broke from Disciples to maintain Campbell's *Declaration and Address*  
Everything in worship must be commanded by Christ = Strict adherence to New Testament worship & organization  
Forbid instrumental music, mission societies, open communion = Not practiced in NT church  
Dislike being called a denomination = No headquarters, no governing body, no clergy  
Elders direct churches, not pastors; Diverse beliefs; Accept Trinity  
Concentrated in South and Southwest US  
Believer's Baptism (immersion only) and Lord's Supper (every Sunday)

Christian Churches and Churches of Christ = Around 1MM in US

1920s - Some left CC(DoC) because of liberalism = Others left when constitution adopted in 1968  
Midway between Disciples and Church of Christ = Accept instruments, but not mission societies  
Trinitarian, but don't like the title = Believer's Baptism (immersion only) and Lord's Supper (every Sunday)

United Church of Christ = Around 1.3MM in US

Mega-Merger = No central doctrinal position, leave it to congregations and individuals  
1931 - Congregational and Christian Churches = Straight-forward merger  
*Congregational Churches* with *General Convention of the Christian Church*  
1934 - Evangelical and Reformed Church = Accepted before constitution was written,  
*Evangelical Synod of North America* with *Reformed Church in the US* = United Brethren almost joined  
1957 - United Church of Christ = Over 10 years of talks  
*Congregational and Christian Churches* with *Evangelical and Reformed Church*

Congregational Churches

Movement from Anglican Church wanting congregations to set their own doctrines  
1609 - John Robinson led Separatists to Netherlands for free practice of religion  
1620 - Most of group moved to New England = Sailed on Mayflower, Settled in Plymouth  
Began Trinitarian; Many turned Unitarian (including Harvard)  
Congregations can change their doctrines as new insights are gained

General Convention of the Christian Church

Abner Jones' "Unitarian Baptists" = Had much in agreement with Barton Stone's Disciples

Evangelical Synod

1817 - Evangelical United Church of Prussia  
King Frederick William III ordered merger of all Lutheran and Reformed churches  
Accepted Luther's Catechism, Augsburg Confession, Heidelberg Catechism = If they differ, choose yourself  
1840 - Evangelical Union of the West = Formed in St. Louis  
1849 - German Evangelical Synod of North America = Upon merger with 4 smaller bodies

Reformed Church in the US

1793 - German Reformed Church = Immigrants of Reformed Church in Germany claimed independence  
1869 - *German* dropped from name after various arguments over language

Closing Prayer

# Lutherans and Other Denominations Denominational Genealogy

