

Telling Their Stories:

The History of Women in the Local Church



A Resource Packet



ARCHIVES & HISTORY

The United Methodist Church

Prepared by
The General Commission on Archives and History
of The United Methodist Church

Madison, New Jersey

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Where Do I Begin?

Recovering Women's History in the Local Church

You have decided to research the history of women in your church. No one in the past has made any effort to collect that information, and you are faced with a room full of records and a church full of people who are potential resources. What steps should you take?

The first step is to do some reading! Familiarize yourself with the history of your church, the history of your area, and the history of women and religion. (*Begin with the women's history bibliography in this packet.*) Read broadly to learn what the world was like for women in the past, not only in the church, but also in the community, state, and nation.

Next, carefully examine your church archives. What records exist of Ladies' Aid Societies, Missionary Circles, the Woman's Society of Christian Service, or the Otterbein Guild? (*Names of denominational women's organizations are listed in this packet.*) Information about women will be contained in many other records as well, including Sunday school records, newsletters, and administrative minutes.

Are women's history projects being done at the conference level? Check with your annual conference Commission on Archives and History, United Methodist Women, Commission on the Status and Role of Women, and ethnic caucuses. You will find important materials in the conference archives, such as records of the annual conference women's organizations. Also, conference newspapers and journals will have information about your church and about women's activities in the annual conference and the general church.

Work with your congregation. Family records can be a gold mine of information. Photographs, scrapbooks, and diaries that belonged to women members can supplement and enhance the church's records. If a family is unwilling to donate materials, perhaps they will allow you to make copies for the church archives.

Go beyond the church to community historical agencies. See what information and assistance they can provide. (*For suggestions, see "Who Can Help Me?" in this packet.*) Remember that many church women have been active in community affairs and social reform organizations like the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

As you gather information, create subject files about organizations, people, and events. These will be useful for later research projects, and are a handy way to organize bits and pieces of information—notes, photocopies, clippings, and photographs.

The process of learning how women have served your church and community will lead you to some exciting research projects and special programs. (*See "How Shall We Celebrate?" in this packet for additional ideas.*)

Who Can Help Me?

Historical Agencies Beyond the Church

There are many organizations outside the church that can help you with information, training, and resources as you do research and plan programs.

✧ Local ✧

Visit your town library. Many libraries have local history rooms, and some time spent studying town and county history will help you better understand the history of your church. The library may also be willing to lend items for display; help plan special tours and programs; and offer training in oral history, writing, and archival skills. Local newspapers contain much information about church events; if back issues are not available at the library and cannot be accessed electronically, they probably can be ordered on microfilm through Interlibrary Loan (ILL) from the state library. Books, articles, and other resources can also be borrowed through ILL from libraries all over the country.

Don't overlook nearby colleges. Their libraries, history departments, or women's studies programs may be fruitful sources of information, encouragement, training, and inspiration.

Local historical societies, genealogical societies, and graveyard preservation groups will be very interested in the work you are doing, and can often provide you with information not available elsewhere.

✧ Regional ✧

Every state has an archives and library; in addition, many counties have historical societies. Ask your town librarian for the addresses. Like local organizations, county and state agencies welcome research requests, although you should be aware that there may be charges for staff services. Regional agencies may also offer publications that will be of great use to you, and you can request catalogs. Also ask for calendars of training programs in archival management, oral history, research, and writing techniques. Scholarships may be available to help cover transportation and registration costs.

✧ National ✧

The American Association for State and Local History provides a wide range of services and publications. Write or visit their website for information and catalogs.

American Association for State and Local History
1717 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37203-2991
www.aaslh.org

Note: The AASLH publishes a *Directory of Historical Agencies in North America* that lists hundreds of historical societies and interest groups.

How Shall We Celebrate?

Ideas for Special Programs and Projects

These suggestions are only a place to start. Balance creativity with practicality as you adapt these ideas to fit your circumstances or as you develop other projects. Try to include as many people as possible in the celebrations and develop projects that will have a permanent impact on the church's understanding of its history.



- *Honor a specific woman's name and memory.* One way is to name a room in the church or a church organization after her. Another is to develop an awards program that honors her memory. For example, an award named for a woman who became a missionary could be given to the Sunday School student who raises the most money for missions.
- *Consider a "woman of the month" program,* with articles in the church newsletter each month for a year. You could supplement the articles by sharing women's stories in the worship service and discussing them in the Sunday School.
- *What about a Women's Hall of Fame?* Accept nominations from Sunday School classes or the entire congregation. (This can be expanded to include women in the Bible and/or women in United Methodist history.) The "Hall" may be an actual photo gallery in a hallway or a classroom, or it may simply be a photo album on display in the fellowship room, with biographical information accompanying the photographs and illustrations.
- *Make women's history part of the worship service.* "History Minutes" are one way to tell some of the stories you are learning. If you are lucky enough to have letters or diaries from some of the women in your church's past, read from them. If you have developed an oral history project, play excerpts from the recordings for the congregation, or ask a longtime member to reminisce about worship services fifty years ago. Have a special Sunday service focusing on women's heritage: sing hymns written by women, discuss the work of women in The United Methodist Church, and commemorate the service of women in your church.
- *Encourage Sunday School classes to study women's history.* Children can interview women, participate in a poster contest, or do research and submit entries for a Hall of Fame. They can add dates from your church's history to the United Methodist women's history time line. Teens and adults can participate in discussion groups. Classes can adopt an historical figure, do research, and present a special program.
- *Prepare an exhibit, PowerPoint presentation, or video* on the contributions of women to your church's history. Use the artifacts available to you to create a visual record of the past.

- *Oral history is a way to make a long-lasting contribution to women's history.* The women in your church have stories to tell, and oral history interviews can capture their history. Although an oral history project is very rewarding, it takes a certain amount of training and a real commitment of time and energy. If you undertake an oral history project, don't forget the men! Their stories, perspectives, and insights are part of the picture, too. (*See "What Was It Like?" in this packet for additional information.*)
- *Share the story through drama.* Living history, reenactments of past events, one-woman dramas drawn from letters and diaries—all of these are ways to bring the past to life. There are a number of books about living history; check with a local library or historical society. An area theater company, college, or high school may be willing to lend costumes and props.
- *Develop a women's history collection for your archives or library.* Encourage people to donate memorabilia pertaining to women in the church. You may gain some valuable exhibit-quality items as well as some important historical resources. Such a project may uncover some missing church records, as well.
- *Look beyond your church.* What about joint celebrations or research projects with other churches in the area? Is there a United Methodist college nearby? People from the library, history department, or women's studies program may be very interested in working with you. Contact your annual conference Commission on Archives and History and the annual conference United Methodist Women; find out how you can get involved in their women's history projects and how they can help you with yours. Finally, don't neglect secular historical agencies in your town or county. You can help each other gain important insights into the history of your church and community by working together on projects.

What Was It Like?

Telling Women's Stories Through Oral History



An oral history project is an exciting way to preserve the personal stories of women and men and to give them the chance to tell you "what it was really like." Thanks to modern technology—future generations will hear people's words in their own voices, with the shading, nuance, and emphasis that give language its emotional richness.

How to begin? First, know your church's history. With good preparation, you can ask pertinent questions, untangle inconsistencies, and confidently guide the interview. It is also important to be well informed about the history of your town, your region, and the country so that you can put questions into historical context.

Next, recruit your interviewees. Don't limit yourself to women or to the elderly. All church members have a perspective to offer on the roles and contributions of women. Consider using youth to interview older adults. Remember members who are homebound, but whose long experience in the church can add vital information to your archives.

Start by asking easy questions, such as name and date of birth. Ask one question at a time, and give the interviewee plenty of time to respond. Be an active listener; pick up on what gets said and ask follow-up questions. Ask questions that require more than a yes or no answer, but remember that you are in charge of the interview—don't let the conversation get sidetracked.

It is valuable to hear individual stories; it is also helpful to hear different people's answers to the same questions. Allow your interviewee to talk about the negative as well as the positive; you want a full picture of the past, not just "happy history." Try to strike a balance between personal reminiscence, opinion, and fact.

The interview process is a sensitive one. The person you interview may reveal more than he or she intended; it is good to feel so comfortable that you both forget the tape recorder is on, but make sure that the interviewee is aware that the conversation will be preserved for others to hear. Avoid "off the record" comments.

There are many other components of a good oral history interview. Fortunately, a growing number of colleges and historical agencies offer training. Contact your state or county historical societies and libraries about workshops. In addition, the Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University School of Theology has developed an extensive training program. Contact the Center for more information (745 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215, www.bu.edu/sth/shaw/). Also, the American Association for State and Local History has a number of helpful resources (*see "Who Can Help Me?" for address and website.*)



Should We Do a Display?

Ideas for Women's History Exhibits

Exhibits are a way to illustrate and interpret the lives of women in the church. Letters, photographs, a pair of gloves, newspaper clippings, ticket stubs, an old bulletin, and church minutes combined with effective interpretation can tell a woman's story in a fresh way.

Where can I find items to display? Look first in the church archives, but go beyond that. Members of the congregation may have items to share, and the local library or historical society may be willing to lend materials for an exhibit.

What stories can I tell? Choose a theme based on your audience, materials available to you, and the space you can use.

☼ Show what church women were reading at a specific period (perhaps at the time of the church's founding). Use Bible translations, hymns, devotional literature, local newspapers, denominational materials, and popular novels.

☼ To give an idea of women's involvement in the church, portray a week in the life of a woman (real or fictional) in the church's past—attendance at meetings, teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir, serving at a potluck dinner, and so on.

☼ Develop a photo gallery of church leaders' portraits with labels that ask intriguing questions about each person (have the answers close at hand). For example, "I organized the first woman's missionary society in our church. Do you know who I am?"

☼ Follow an active member throughout her life with baptismal and membership records, meeting minutes, Sunday School pins, bulletins, newspaper articles, and photographs.

☼ Explore the ways that secular history has affected the church. For example, what do records reveal about the church's reaction to the women's movements of the 1910s and 1970s? Possible sources include minutes of women's organizations, membership lists of boards and agencies, sermon titles, liturgies, memorabilia from the congregation (a NOW pin, a voter registration card), and articles in the secular and church press.

☼ Trace a church woman's involvement in the community over a period of years, through minutes, correspondence, newspaper articles, photographs, and records of secular organizations.

☼ Profile women in full-time church service: diaconal ministers, ordained clergy, educators at United Methodist schools, employees of general church agencies, or delegates to Annual, Jurisdictional, and General Conference. This may be part of a larger exhibit on the history of The United Methodist Church or on the denomination's administrative structure.

What Makes a Good Exhibit?

Display Techniques

Simplicity, organization, and neatness help make any exhibit enjoyable and educational. Visit history museums and observe how exhibits are designed. Read about exhibit design at the library. The following guidelines will get you started.

❖ *Space* ❖

If you have an exhibit area, take special note of such features as location (is it easy for people to find?), security, lighting (both natural and artificial), number of cases, and any wall space where things can be mounted. If you do not have a space, can you get one? If no floor space is available, can you use part of a wall in the foyer or fellowship hall? If you have no cases, are there tables, bookcases, or desks you can use? You need enough space to comfortably accommodate visitors, enough light to illuminate without harming fragile materials, and enough security to protect your exhibit from damage or theft.

❖ *Artifacts* ❖

You can display many things, from books, letters, and newspapers to photographs, clothing, sheet music, bulletins, and ticket stubs. Use items from the church archives; also ask if you can borrow items from the congregation, the town library, church organizations, and the local historical society. Make your exhibit visually interesting as well as informative. Add some eye-catching photos, a colorful piece of fabric, or a period advertisement to the display.

❖ *Design* ❖

As you set up the display, remember that the eye naturally travels from left to right. Don't clutter the cases; balance creativity with practicality. Don't use tape, paper clips, or other visible fasteners on labels or artifacts. Props (such as stands or easels) add depth to the exhibit. They also protect delicate items like the bindings of opened books. You can make props out of cardboard and cover them with fabric, or purchase them from library supply catalogs. When displaying documents, include transcriptions if the original is difficult to read or if you want to highlight a specific passage. Photocopies can also enlarge important sections of a document. Photocopies of a specific document (like the list of charter members) can be souvenirs.

❖ *Labels* ❖

Labels are your stand-in, telling the visitor about the items on display. Use short, declarative sentences; avoid the passive voice or complicated language. A label that asks a question engages the reader; quotations capture people's attention. Make your language specific and personal. Remember that the labels and the artifacts should work together to illuminate your theme. It is vital that labels be neatly typed in lettering large enough to be read easily. Simple black lettering on a white background is generally best.

In Their Own Words

These passages may be read as part of a women's history celebration, used in a display, or printed in the church newsletter to challenge, educate, and inspire.

Jarena Lee

I met with many troubles on my journey, especially from the elder, who like many others, was averse to a woman's preaching. And here let me tell that elder, if he has not gone to heaven, that I have heard that as far back as Adam Clarke's time, his objections to female preaching were met by the answer, "If an ass reproved Balaam, and a barn-door fowl reproved Peter, why should not a woman reprove sin?" I do not introduce this for its complimentary classification of women with donkeys and fowls, but to give the reply of a poor woman, who had once been a slave. To the first companion she said, "Maybe a speaking woman is like an ass, but I can tell you one thing, the ass seen the angel when Balaam didn't."

from *Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee* (1849)

Lydia Sexton

[An] old man . . . was at first a great persecutor of preaching women . . . One day after the congregation was dismissed, he stood in the aisle until I came along by him, when he handed me twenty-five cents. That quarter was of great value to me, as I looked upon him as my persecutor. The brethren told me he had said that our work was a money-making scheme; and if the people would quit paying the preachers they would quit preaching. When he handed me the quarter he told me to pray for him. That was a good omen. That same man professed religion [and] joined the church.

from *Autobiography of Lydia Sexton* (1882)

Annie Wittenmyer

The time spent by the women of the Church in *dress* and personal adornment—in useless and ornamental work—is almost incredible . . . I have known women in the Church to spend months of precious time over a piece of embroidery not much larger than a lady's pocket-handkerchief, and the while make excuse that they had no time for Christ's work. What a spectacle for heaven to look down upon!

from her book, *Woman's Work for Jesus* (1873)

Fanny Jackson Coppin

I never rose to recite in my classes at Oberlin but I felt that I had the honor of the whole African race upon my shoulders. I felt that, should I fail, it would be ascribed to the fact that I was colored . . . Slavery made us poor, and its gloomy, malicious shadow tends to keep us so . . . It seems necessary that we should make known to the good men and women who are so solicitous about our souls and our minds that we haven't quite got rid of our bodies yet, and until we do we must feed and clothe them; and this thing of keeping us out of work forces us back upon charity.

from her autobiography, *Reminiscences of School Life, and Hints on Teaching* (1913)

Eugenia St. John

There is a serious question before you . . . Dare this conference stand before the omen given by God and frustrate his will for the upbuilding of his church by your prejudices? . . . The great question of the future is whether you will have power to conquer the forces of sin, and I tell you it will need every woman that can be found to stand side by side with the good-minded men in this work if the church is to be triumphant.

from debate over seating women delegates at the 1892 Methodist Protestant General Conference (quoted in *Methodist Recorder*, June 4, 1892)

Frances Willard

Of all the fallacies ever concocted, none is more idiotic than the one indicated in the saying, "A woman's strength consists in her weakness." . . . Let us insist first, last, and always that gentleness is never so attractive as when joined with strength, purity never so invincible as when leagued with intelligence, beauty never so charming as when it is seen to be the embellishment of reason and the concomitant of character. What we need to sound in the ears of girlhood is *to be brave*, and in the ears of boyhood *to be gentle*. There are not two sets of virtues; and there is but one greatness of character; it is that of him (or her) who combines the noblest traits of man and woman in nature, words, and deeds.

from her address before the Women's Christian Temperance Union at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, October 16-21, 1893

Anna Howard Shaw

At a [woman's suffrage rally] held in San Francisco, Rabbi Vorsanger, who was not in favor of suffrage for women, advanced the heartening theory that in a thousand years more they might possibly be ready for it. After a thousand years of education for women, of physically-developed women, of uncorseted women, he said, we might have the ideal woman, and could then begin to talk about freedom for her. When the rabbi sat down there was a shout from the audience for me to answer him, but all I said was that the ideal woman would be rather lonely, as it would certainly take another thousand years to develop an ideal man capable of being a mate for her.

from her autobiography, *The Story of a Pioneer* (1915)

Mary McLeod Bethune

Can one love God and yet believe that he is right in attempting to restrict his neighbor's knowledge, the growth of his mind, to that which will restrict his neighbor's livelihood? His neighbor's share in the conduct of the community? Can one love God and serve Him with open mind and open heart and still wish for his neighbor less than he has for himself? Consider his neighbor to possess less human dignity? To be worthy of less courtesy and respect? To need fewer physical comforts and cultural opportunities? No! Surely none of these things are the love of God, nor are these the acts of brotherhood.

from "We march forward to brotherhood," sermon given at Riverside Church, New York City, November 13, 1949

Margaret Henrichsen

The more families I got to know, the more people came to trust me, the heavier the load and the less time for study, meditation, and creative work What little time I could get for real study was further trespassed upon by glaring needs in the house; floors that had to be swept or washed, windows that had become so smoky they cried out to be washed, some ironing and mending—although I did as little as I possibly could. Yes, the trouble was that having chosen to be the minister—I also had to be "her wife."

from her autobiography, *Seven Steeples* (1953)

The Status of Women

The words and acts of Jesus give the Christian a vision of what a just society should be. Discipleship to Jesus requires both men and women to measure their attitudes about themselves and all others by his values and to act in accord with those values. The full worth and dignity of each person is to be acknowledged and expressed. The Church may help the vision of Jesus to be realized by proclaiming that women are persons created in the image of God, here to serve with men in the breaking forth of the Kingdom.

from *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church*; resolution adopted 1980

Recommended Books on the History of Women in United Methodism

General American Women's History

Evans, Sara M. *Born for Liberty; A History of Women in America*. New York: The Free Press, 1989.

Woloch, Nancy. *Women and the American Experience*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

General United Methodist History

Ferguson, Charles W. *Organizing to Beat the Devil; Methodists and the Making of America*. New York: Doubleday, 1971.

McEllhenney, John G., ed. *United Methodism in America: A Compact History*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992.

Richey, Russell, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt. *American Methodism: A Compact History*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012.

-----, *The Methodist Experience in America, Vol I & II*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000, 2010.
American Women's Religious History

James, Janet Wilson, ed. *Women in American Religion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1980.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford and Keller, Rosemary Skinner, eds. *Women and Religion in America* (3 volumes). New York: Harper & Row, 1981-1986.

United Methodist Women's History

Born, Ethel W. *By My Spirit: The Story of Methodist Protestant Women in Mission, 1879-1939*. New York: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1990.

Campbell, Barbara E. *In the Middle of Tomorrow*. New York: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1975.

Fagan, Ann. *This is Our Song: Employed Women in the United Methodist Tradition*. New York: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1986.

Gorrell, Donald K., ed. *"Woman's Rightful Place": Women in United Methodist History*. Dayton: United Theological Seminary, 1980.

Keller, Rosemary Skinner, ed. *Spirituality and Social Responsibility: Vocational Vision of Women in the United Methodist Tradition*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

Magalis, Elaine. *Conduct Becoming to a Woman: Bolted Doors and Burgeoning Missions*. New York: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1973.

Methodist Women: A World Sisterhood: A History of the World Federation of Methodist Women, 1923-1986. s.l.: World Federation of Methodist Women, 1986?

Schmidt, Jean Miller. *Grace Sufficient: A History of Women in American Methodism 1760-1939*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.

Stevens, Thelma. *Legacy for the Future: History of Christian Social Relations in the Woman's Division of Christian Service, 1940-1968*. Cincinnati: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1978.

They Went Out Not Knowing...An Encyclopedia of 100 Women in Mission. New York: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1986.

Thomas, Hilah, Rosemary Skinner Keller, and Louise L. Queen, eds. *Women in New Worlds: Historical Perspectives on the Wesleyan Tradition*. Volumes 1 and 2. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981-1982.

Thompson, Patricia A. *Courageous Past, Bold Future: The Journey Toward Full Clergy Rights for Women in The United Methodist Church*. Nashville: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2006.

To a Higher Glory: The Growth and Development of Black Women Organized for Mission in The United Methodist Church, 1940-1968. New York: Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1978?

History of Women in the Annual Conference

These titles are offered as examples of the work being done at the annual conference level. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Fowler, Elizabeth T. *Holston Women: A Journey of Faith*. Knoxville, Tennessee: Women's History Task Group of Holston Conference, The United Methodist Church, 1984.

Jewett, Patricia A. *The History of Maine Methodism Through the Woman's Sphere*. Portland, Maine: S. Burke, 1984.

The Journey: United Methodist Women in North Georgia, 1878-1983 (1984) and *A Story Not Yet Over: The Journey, United Methodist Women in North Georgia, vol.II*. (North Georgia Conference United Methodist Women, 1992)

Shull, Cleo B., ed. *From Among the Many: Women in Mission from Kansas West Conference United Methodist Women from 1885-1985*. United Methodist Women, Kansas West Conference, 1985.

The Women Came Early; A History of Women in the West Virginia Conference. The Task Force on Women's History, West Virginia Conference, The United Methodist Church, 1986.

United Methodist Women; Heritage of Love and Work. Rocky Mountain Conference, The United Methodist Church, 1985.

General Commission on Archives and History
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P.O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940
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Organized for Mission
Women's Organizations in the United Methodist Denominations

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (1784-1939)

Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (1869-1939)

Woman's Home Missionary Society (1880-1939)

Wesleyan Service Guild (1921-1972)

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH (1844-1939)

Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (1878-1910)

Woman's Home Missionary Society (1890-1910)

Woman's Missionary Council (1910-1939)

METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH (1830-1939)

Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (1879-1928)

Woman's Home Missionary Society (1893-1928)

Woman's Work of the Methodist Protestant Church (1928-1939)

THE METHODIST CHURCH (1939-1968)

Woman's Society of Christian Service (1939-1972)

Wesleyan Service Guild (1921-1972)

UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST (1800-1946)

Women's Missionary Association (1875-1946)

Young Women's Mission Band, later Otterbein Guild (1883-1946)

EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION (1803-1922)

Woman's Missionary Society (1884-1922)

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH (1894-1922)

Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society (1891-1922)

EVANGELICAL CHURCH (1922-1946)

Woman's Missionary Society (1922-1946)

Christian Service Guild (1944-1958)

EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN (1946-1968)

Women's Society of World Service (1946-1972)

Christian Service Guild (1944-1958)

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1968-PRESENT)

Women's Society of Christian Service (1968-1972)

United Methodist Women (1972-present)

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST

Ladies Aid Societies: Date from early American Methodism; flourished at the local church level in the various denominations. Formally recognized in the 1904 Methodist Episcopal Discipline.

The Female Missionary Society of New York (1819-1961): Auxiliary to the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society; largest and most influential of the local female auxiliaries organized prior to the formation of a denominational woman's missionary society.

Ladies' China Missionary Society (Methodist Episcopal Church) (1848-1871): Reorganized in 1871 as the Baltimore Branch of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

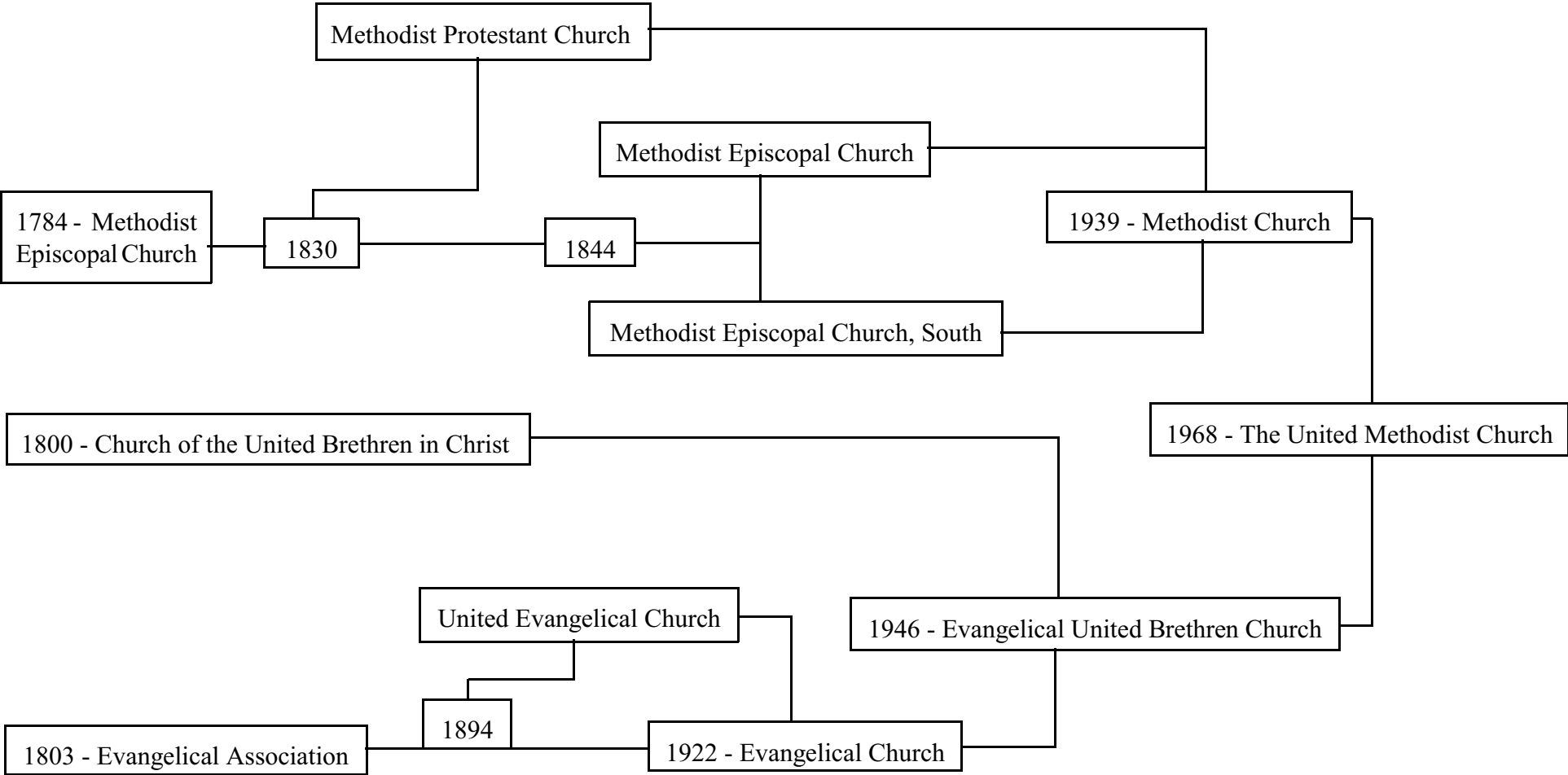
Ladies and Pastors Christian Union (1868-1870s): Under pastoral supervision, female members of the Union visited the sick and needy.

World Federation of Methodist Women (1939-present): Affiliated with the World Methodist Council.

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The United Methodist Church and its Predecessors



Timeline

American Women in the United Methodist Tradition

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| <p>1760 Philip and Margaret Embury and Paul and Barbara Heck arrive in New York from County Limerick, Ireland.</p> <p>1766 Barbara Heck is instrumental in organizing the first Methodist congregation in America (New York City), which includes Bettye, a black woman.</p> <p>c.1770 Mary Evans Thorne is appointed class leader by Joseph Pilmore in Philadelphia, probably the first woman in America to be so appointed.</p> <p>1773 The first Methodist Conference in America is held in St. George's Church, Philadelphia.</p> <p>1774 Mother Ann Lee and a small group of Shakers sail to America from England.</p> <p>1775 German settlers account for about 10% of the total white population in the thirteen colonies.</p> <p>1776 American Revolution; all of Wesley's missionaries except for Francis Asbury return to England.</p> <p>1784 The Methodist Episcopal Church is organized at the Christmas Conference in Baltimore.</p> <p>1787 Cokesbury College opens at Abingdon, Maryland.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The Free African Society is formed in Philadelphia, the beginnings of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Dr. Benjamin Rush opens The Young Ladies Academy in Philadelphia, the first such American school.</p> <p>1789 Philip William Otterbein organizes the first annual conference of his followers.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The Methodist Book Concern is begun in Philadelphia.</p> <p>1790 The first successful American Sunday school is established in Philadelphia.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The first U.S. census reports that there are 697,897 slaves and 59,466 free blacks in the United States.</p> <p>1791 John Wesley dies.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Samuel Slater opens a cotton mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, signaling the onset of the Industrial Revolution. By 1828, nine out of ten New England textile workers are women.</p> <p>1792 Mary Wollstonecraft writes <i>Vindication of the</i></p> | <p><i>Rights of Woman.</i></p> <p>1794 The American Convention of Abolition Societies is formed in Philadelphia with delegates from nine societies.</p> <p>1800 First woman's missionary society is formed in Boston (Baptist and Congregational women) to raise money and pray for domestic and foreign missions.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A camp meeting is held in Kentucky, launching a movement closely identified with Methodism for over a century. Camp meetings are part of the Second Great Awakening, a series of revivals that sweeps the nation during the first decades of the nineteenth century.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Jacob Albright forms three classes among the Germans in Pennsylvania.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Philip William Otterbein and Martin Boehm found the United Brethren in Christ.</p> <p>1803 The Louisiana Purchase opens new territories for white settlement.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The first conference of Albright's followers is held.</p> <p>1807 England prohibits slave trade.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Congress passes a law prohibiting the importation of slaves from Africa; the law is widely violated, however.</p> <p>1808 There are one million slaves in the United States.</p> <p>1816 The African Methodist Episcopal Church is formed and Richard Allen is chosen bishop.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The first General Conference of the Evangelical Association convenes.</p> <p>1817 Bishop Richard Allen allows black evangelist Jarena Lee to exhort and to hold prayer meetings in her home, although he denies her a preaching license.</p> <p>1819 The Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church is founded. The New York Female Missionary Society is organized as an auxiliary to it.</p> <p>1820 American Colonization Society founds Liberia for the repatriation of Negroes.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The African Methodist Episcopal Church, Zion, is organized in New York.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">In the 1820s, the ideology of separate spheres</p> |
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- for men and women begins to appear in popular literature.
- 1821 **The Daughters of Conference (A.M.E. Zion) forms to raise money for preachers and church buildings.**
- Emma Willard opens a women's school in Troy, New York.
- Francis Cabot Lowell introduces the "boarding house" system in his new mill in Massachusetts, which employs only women.
- 1824 American Sunday School Union is organized.
- 1825 Robert Owen establishes New Harmony, a utopian community in Indiana.
- 1826 The *Christian Advocate* (Methodist Episcopal newspaper) begins publication.
- 1828 Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* published.
- Ladies Magazine* (later *Godey's Lady's Book*) begins publication; Sarah Josepha Hale is the editor.
- 1829 Suttee, the custom of immolating a widow along with her dead husband, is abolished in British India.
- Lydia Maria Child's manual *The Frugal American Housewife* is published. By 1842, it has gone through thirty editions.
- 1830 The Methodist Protestant Church is organized.
- By this year, slavery north of the Mason-Dixon line has been virtually abolished.
- Political upheaval and economic hardship in Germany lead to massive immigration to the U.S.
- 1831 William Lloyd Garrison begins publishing the abolitionist periodical *The Liberator*, in Boston.
- Several hundred Polish political exiles immigrate to the U.S.
- 1832 The Boston Female Antislavery Society is founded.
- A black student, Charles B. Ray, enters Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Students protest until he agrees to leave.
- Black women in Boston organize the African-American Female Intelligence Society.
- 1833 Slavery is abolished in the British Empire.
- Lydia Maria Child writes a pioneer antislavery tract.
- Oberlin College opens in Ohio. It admits blacks and women from its inception.
- Melville Cox begins the first American Methodist foreign mission, to Liberia.
- 1834 The moral reform movement begins in New York City with the organization of the New York Female Moral Reform Society. By 1840 it is a national society claiming 555 auxiliaries, but the movement does not last beyond the end of the 1840s.
- Sophronia Farrington, the first unmarried Methodist woman missionary, arrives in Liberia.**
- 1835 **Phoebe Palmer institutes a weekly prayer meeting in her home; for 37 years she is Methodism's most famous woman evangelist.**
- 1836 Sarah and Angelina Grimke are hired as the first women agents of the American Antislavery Society and lecture in public to audiences of men and women.
- The New York Women's Anti-Slavery Society bars blacks from membership.
- 1837 **Ann Wilkins, with the support of the New York Female Missionary Society, goes to Liberia. She retires in 1856 as the senior missionary on the field.**
- Victoria becomes Queen of Great Britain.
- Mary Lyon opens Mount Holyoke Female Seminary.
- Catharine Beecher, objecting to the Grimke sisters' public role, argues in a tract that woman should confine her activities to "the domestic and social circle."
- Financial and economic panic in the United States.
- 1838-9 The five southern nations (Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles) are forcibly moved from the Southeast to the Southwest. Nearly one-half die of starvation, exhaustion, and exposure along the Trail of Tears.
- 1838 Sarah Grimke publishes *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman*.
- The *Summerytown Bauernfreund*, a German language newspaper, warns that "if more Irish come into our country, the English and the Irish will rule over us Americans."
- 1839 **The M.E. Church acquires Wesleyan Female College, Macon, Georgia (founded**

1836), the first college to grant full collegiate degrees to women.

Phoebe Palmer's *Guide to Christian Perfection* (later *Guide to Holiness*) begins publication.

Mississippi enacts the first Married Women's Property law.

1840s Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania pass laws limiting the hours of employment of minors in textile factories.

1840 Washington Temperance Society formed.

Newbury Biblical Institute (Vermont) is founded, the first American Methodist seminary, forerunner of Boston University School of Theology.

1841 First university degrees granted to women in the United States.

***The Ladies' Repository*, the first Methodist periodical for women, begins publication.**

Catharine Beecher publishes *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, an immensely popular household management manual.

1842 Boston and Albany connected by railroad.

1843 Social reformer Dorothea Dix reveals in a report to the Massachusetts legislature the shocking conditions in prisons and asylums.

Orange Scott and others, favoring the abolition of slavery, withdraw from the M.E. Church to form the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.

Sojourner Truth begins traveling through the United States preaching and lecturing on abolition.

1844 China and the U.S. sign first treaty of peace, amity, and commerce.

The New York Ladies' Home Missionary Society is organized.

The Methodist Episcopal Church is divided, north and south, by the Plan of Separation. The issue of slavery also divides the Presbyterian and Baptist denominations.

S.F.B. Morse's telegraph is used for the first time between Baltimore and Washington.

1845 Beginning this year, the potato famine in Ireland drives thousands of immigrants to the United States.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is formally organized in Louisville, Kentucky.

Lowell mill workers organize the Female

Labor Reform Association.

1846 Sewing machine patented by Elias Howe.

Economic hardship brings another great wave of immigration from Germany. By 1854, almost 900,000 Germans have come to the U.S., outdistancing all other immigrant groups.

1847 Gold discoveries in California lead to first gold rush.

The M.E. Church begins mission work in China.

A United Brethren quarterly conference gives Charity Opheral a preacher's license.

Horace Bushnell's *Christian Nurture* signals an important shift in perceptions of childhood.

The M.E. Church, South publishes *Southern Ladies' Companion*. (Becomes *Home Circle* in 1855).

1848 Mexican War ends; U.S. gains extensive new territory.

Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, launches the women's rights movement.

The Ladies' China Missionary Society of Baltimore is organized.

The M.E. Church, South begins mission work in China.

Spiritualism becomes popular.

1849 Amelia Bloomer begins American women's dress reform.

Jarena Lee's *Journal* is published.

Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery in Maryland and subsequently returns to the South nineteen times, rescuing over 300 slaves.

1850 **The New York Ladies' Home Missionary Society, under the leadership of Phoebe Palmer, begins a mission in Five Points, the worst section of New York City.**

Lucy Stanton is the first black woman to complete a collegiate course of study (at Oberlin College).

The Fugitive Slave Law eliminates any safeguards for runaway slaves, even in free states.

1851 **Lydia Sexton is voted "recommendation" as a "pulpit speaker" by the United Brethren General Conference.**

1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Earliest call yet discovered for deaconesses as an order of the M.E. Church (*Zion's Herald*, March 17, 1852)

Sojourner Truth delivers her famous "Ain't I a woman?" speech at the Second National Women's Suffrage convention in Akron, Ohio.

1853 Antoinette Brown Blackwell is ordained by the Congregational Church. Luther Lee, Wesleyan Methodist leader, preaches the ordination sermon.

The growth of the Know-Nothing Party reflects widespread prejudice against immigrants and Catholics.

Anne Douglass, a white woman from South Carolina, is imprisoned in Norfolk, Virginia for violating a state law against instruction of Negroes.

1854 Commodore Perry negotiates first American-Japanese treaty.

Mass immigration to the U.S. by Poles suffering economic hardship.

"War for Bleeding Kansas" between slave and free states.

1855 Garrett Biblical Institute opens in Evanston, Illinois.

Iowa becomes the first state university to admit women.

The first missionaries of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ are sent to Sierra Leone.

1857 **Clementina Rowe Butler** and Dr. William Butler arrive as the first missionaries of the M.E. Church in India.

Dwight L. Moody begins his career as a revivalist.

The United Brethren General conference passes a resolution that no woman should be allowed to preach.

With the Dred Scott decision, the U.S. Supreme Court declares that blacks are not citizens.

1858 **The Ladies' China Missionary Society supports a girls' school in China, and two unmarried teachers, Sarah and Beulah Woolston, are sent by the denominational Missionary Society.**

Mrs. M.L. Kelley of the M.E. Church, South, organizes a fund-raising effort for missionaries in China. This is the earliest

effort on record by women of the M.E.C.S. in support of foreign missions.

1859 Charles Darwin publishes *Origin of the Species*.

1860 The Free Methodist church breaks away from the M.E. Church and organizes in Pekin, New York.

There are nearly four million slaves and 488,000 free blacks, 14% of the American population.

1861 The Civil War begins. Over the next four years, women in large numbers take over family farms and businesses, work in factories and as teachers and nurses. The U.S. Sanitary Commission involves thousands of women at the local level, including **Annie Wittenmyer**, an agent of the Western Commission.

1862 Marie Zakrzewska, a physician, opens the nucleus of the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston.

1863 The Emancipation Proclamation is announced on January 1.

1864 Methodist deaconess work begins in Germany.

1865 Vassar College opens, the first large endowed collegiate institution for women.

Fanny Jackson Coppin graduates from Oberlin College.

The Ku Klux Klan is formed in Tennessee.

1866 **"The Widow Van Cott" (Maggie Newton Van Cott) begins a more than 30 year career as a preacher and evangelist.**

The M.E. Church forms the Freedmen's Aid Society to establish schools for blacks in the South.

Helenor M. Davison is ordained a deacon by the Indiana Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, probably making her the first ordained woman in the Methodist tradition.

The Equal Rights Association forms to work for suffrage for blacks and women.

The M.E. Church, South adopts lay representation in General and Annual Conferences.

Women of all denominations begin educational work among blacks in the South.

1867 National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness is founded.

1868 **The Ladies and Pastors Christian Union is**

founded by Annie Wittenmyer to foster ministry to the sick and needy.

The New England Suffrage Association (later the American Woman S.A.) is organized.

- 1869 **Maggie Newton Van Cott is granted a local preacher's license by the Methodist Episcopal Church.**

Fanny Jackson Coppin becomes head principal of the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia. She spends 37 years at the Institute, now Cheyney State College.

The first Japanese immigrants arrive in the U.S. (California).

Lydia Sexton (United Brethren) is appointed chaplain of the Kansas State Prison at the age of 70, the first woman in the United States to hold such a position.

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton found the National Woman Suffrage Association.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church is formed in Boston at the instigation of missionary wives Clementina Butler and Lois Parker. Isabella Thoburn and Clara Swain leave for India as the Society's first missionaries.

Amanda Berry Smith is active as an A.M.E. preacher in New York and New Jersey.

Emily Duncan Harwood (M.E.) opens the first Protestant school in New Mexico Territory in a former henhouse.

Arabella Mansfield is the first woman lawyer admitted to the bar in the United States.

Women of the M.E. South withdraw from the Ladies' China Missionary Society and organize the Trinity Home Mission.

- 1870 The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church is organized. (the name is changed in 1956 to Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.)

Isabella Thoburn opens a girls' school in Lucknow.

- 1871 Union Biblical Seminary (United Brethren in Christ) opens in Dayton, Ohio.

The Ladies' China Missionary Society is formally reorganized as the Baltimore Branch of the W.F.M.S. of the M.E. Church.

Laymen are received into the General Conference of the M.E. Church.

- 1872 Aaron Montgomery Ward begins a mail-order

business in Chicago.

Charlotte E. Ray, the first black woman lawyer, graduates from Howard University Law School.

- 1873 Gunsmith firm of E. Remington and Sons begins to produce typewriters.

Boston University (M.E.) opens; women are admitted to every department of the school.

Dr. Edward Clarke argues in *Sex in Education* that too much education endangers women's ability to bear children.

Sarah Dickey (United Brethren) opens Mt. Hermon Seminary for black girls in Mississippi and continues as its principal for over thirty years.

- 1874 Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children founded in New York.

Dora E. Schoonmaker is sent to Japan as the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the M.E. Church begins mission work in that country.

Woman's Parent Mite Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Church is formed.

The Chautauqua Movement begins with a Sunday school teacher's assembly at Chautauqua, New York.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union is formed by a group of women at Chautauqua following a lecture by Jennie Fowler Willing (M.E.), who presides over its first meeting. Annie Wittenmyer (M.E.) is the first president (1874-79). Frances Willard (M.E.) becomes its corresponding secretary. Two years later she openly espouses woman's suffrage.

The W.F.M.S. of the M.E. Church opens the first hospital for women in Asia (Bareilly, India).

- 1875 **United Brethren women organize the Woman's Missionary Association; in 1877 they are given General conference recognition.**

- 1876 Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone.

Jennie Hartzell organizes mission work on a large scale among black women in New Orleans.

Centennial Exhibition is held at Philadelphia.

Anna Oliver is the first woman to receive the Bachelor of Divinity degree from an American theological seminary (Boston University School of Theology); two years later, Anna Howard Shaw earns the same

	degree.		
1877	Thomas Edison invents the phonograph. Emily Beekin is sent to Sierra Leone as the first missionary of the United Brethren's Woman's Missionary Association.	1883	The first skyscraper (ten stories) is built, in Chicago. The Young Women's Mission Band (later the Otterbein Guild) for girls over 15 years old is organized by the Woman's Missionary Association (U.B.)
1878	A. A. Pope manufactures the first bicycles in America. The Edison Electric Light Company is formed. Women in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South organize the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of their church and are given General Conference recognition. Lochie Rankin goes to China as their first missionary. Amanda Berry Smith preaches in two of the nation's most prestigious churches; soon afterwards she spends more than a decade preaching in England, Scotland, Italy, Egypt, India, and Africa.		Women of the Evangelical Association organize the Woman's Missionary Society.
1879	Frances Willard becomes the second president of the W.C.T.U. She serves until her death in 1898. Mary Baker Eddy becomes pastor of the Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston. The women of the Methodist Protestant Church organize their Woman's Foreign Missionary Society in Pittsburgh.	1884	The A.M.E. General Conference approves the licensing of women as local preachers, but limits them to evangelistic work. The Methodist Protestant General Conference rules Anna Howard Shaw's ordination out of order. Methodists open the Woman's College of Baltimore (later Goucher College).
1880	Canned fruits and meats first appear in stores. The Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church is organized and Lucy Webb Hayes is elected president. Anna Oliver and Anna Howard Shaw are denied ordination by the M.E.C. General Conference. Shaw is then ordained by the Methodist Protestant Church. The Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Zion Church is founded.	1885	Funjinkai (women's organization) begins in the Japanese church. Lucy Rider Meyer (M.E.) opens the Chicago Training School for Methodist women deaconesses and missionaries. Both branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church open mission fields, the M.E.C. in Korea, the M.E.C.S. in Japan. Mrs. M.F. Scranton becomes the first missionary of the W.F.M.S. (M.E. Church) in Korea.
1881	The Christian Endeavor movement is begun by G.E. Clark. Tennessee enacts the first Jim Crow segregation law.	1886	Statue of Liberty dedicated. American Federation of Labor founded. Anna Howard Shaw is the only woman in the graduating class of the Boston University medical school. The interdenominational Student Volunteer Movement is formed. For over 60 years it is the channel for the overseas missionary concerns of thousands of American college students.
1882	U.S. bans Chinese immigration for ten years. Laura Askew Haygood heads an extensive home missions effort in Atlanta. 250,630 Germans immigrate to the U.S. this year; thereafter, the rate declines.	1887	Isabella Thoburn founds the first Christian woman's college in Asia (Lucknow, India).
		1888	George Eastman perfects the "Kodak" box camera. Frances E. Willard, Mary Clarke Nind, Amanda C. Rippey, Angie F. Newman, and Elizabeth D. Van Kirk are elected delegates to the M.E. General Conference, but are denied seating. The Chicago Preachers Meeting successfully petitions General Conference to recognize deaconess work as an official institution of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Deaconess work is placed under

the control of annual conferences.

Sarah Gorham becomes the first woman missionary appointed to the foreign mission field by the A.M.E. church, sponsored by the Woman's Parent Mite Missionary Society.

The Centenary Conference on Protestant Missions is held in London. **Fanny Jackson Coppin**, as president of the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Church, is a delegate.

1889 Oklahoma is opened to non-Indian settlement.

Ella Niswonger becomes the first woman ordained in the United Brethren Church.

Eugenia St. John is ordained an elder by the Kansas Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church.

Jane Addams opens Hull House in Chicago.

The New England Deaconess Home and Training School is founded in Boston.

Ladies' Home Journal begins publication.

The Epworth League is founded.

Alice Harris, M.D. sails to Sierra Leone as one of the first foreign missionaries of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.

1890 First moving-picture shows appear in New York.

The two wings of the suffrage movement unite to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (today the League of Women Voters).

The Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, under the leadership of Lucinda B. Helm, is recognized by the church's General Conference.

Susie Elizabeth Frazier is the first black woman appointed to teach in the New York City public schools.

1891 Beginnings of wireless telegraphy.

1892 Diesel patents his internal combustion engine.

Four women delegates are seated at the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church (laywomen Melissa M. Bonnett, Mrs. M.J. Morgan, and Mrs. A.E. Murphy; and clergywoman Eugenia St. John).

Ellis Island opens.

Anna Oliver and Amanda Berry Smith

share a pulpit in a New Jersey church.

Scarritt Bible and Training School, headed by Maria Gibson, is opened in Kansas City, thanks to the efforts of Belle Harris Bennett (M.E., South).

Over 1,400 blacks have been lynched since 1882. Hundreds more will be lynched over the coming decades.

Iron and steel workers strike.

1893 *If Christ Came to Chicago*, by W.T. Stead, an influential Social Gospel novel, is published.

By this year, many German Protestants, victims of nativist sentiments forty years earlier, have joined the American Protective Association, which warns of the dangers of the "new" immigration of Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe.

The Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Protestant Church is organized.

The World's Columbian Exposition is held in Chicago. The World's Parliament of Religions is held at the same time.

First women delegates are seated at the General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ (Mattie Brewer and Mrs. S.J. Staves).

1894 **Sarah Dickey is ordained by the United Brethren in Christ.**

The United Evangelical Church breaks away from the Evangelical Association.

Julia A.J. Foote is the first woman to be ordained a deacon in the A.M.E. Zion Church.

1895 **New York Evangelical Training School and Settlement House is founded by Jennie Fowler Willing (M.E.) to train deaconesses and serve Hell's Kitchen, an infamous New York slum.**

The M.E. Church, South opens a mission field in Korea.

Mrs. Hartman from Oregon is the first female member of an Evangelical Association annual conference.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton publishes *The Woman's Bible*.

1896 Beginning of the Klondike gold rush.

The Plessy vs. Ferguson decision by the Supreme Court upholds segregation.

Mary Church Terrell organizes the National

	Association of Colored Women.		Steerage rates for immigrants to the U.S. are cut to \$10 by foreign lines.
1897	The National Congress of Mothers is organized.		Ladies Aid Societies, as old as American Methodism, are officially recognized in the 1904 M.E. Book of Discipline, although there is never an official denominational agency.
1898	A.M.E. women form Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Societies. The Polish Women's Alliance is organized in Chicago. Seven missionaries (five of them women) of the United Brethren Woman's Missionary Association are massacred in Sierra Leone. The M.E.C.S. begins mission work in Cuba; Miss Hattie Carson is transferred from Mexico to open a school for girls.		Anna Howard Shaw becomes president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, a position she holds until 1915. Mary McLeod Bethune founds the Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Negro Girls.
1900	The Boxers, an anti-foreign organization, rebels against Westerners in China. 12,635 Japanese enter the U.S. from Hawaii. Deaconess Home for Colored People founded in Cincinnati, including a training school for black deaconesses. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union is founded. A Lay Conference is established, parallel to the Annual Conference of clergy, in the M.E. Church; it grants women "equal laity rights."	1905	From now until 1914, almost 10.5 million immigrants enter the U.S. from southern and eastern Europe.
		1905	The first regular cinema is established (in Pittsburgh). The Asiatic Exclusion League is founded in San Francisco; most member organizations are labor unions.
		1906	Revelations of conditions in Chicago stockyards contained in Upton Sinclair's novel <i>The Jungle</i> lead to the Pure Food and Drugs Act. Martha Drummer, black deaconess of the New England Deaconess Training School (Boston) is sent to Angola by the W.F.M.S. of the M.E. Church. Anna Hall, another black deaconess, goes to the mission field in Liberia.
1901	The Woman's Home Missionary Society of the M.E. Church, South begins work at Paine Institute (founded 1883) in Augusta, Georgia, its first work with blacks. Ella Niswonger is elected the first woman clergy delegate to a United Brethren General Conference. The African Methodist Episcopal Church founds the Colored Deaconess Home in Roanoke, Virginia.		The independence of the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Societies of the M.E. Church, South is threatened by General Conference. First radio program of voice and music is broadcast in the U.S.
1903	The Wright brothers successfully fly a powered airplane. The first Korean immigrants arrive in Honolulu; many soon sail to the mainland U.S. The Women's Trade Union League is founded. The Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the Wesleyan Methodist Church is organized.	1907	Immigration to the U.S. is restricted by law. Bessie Harrison is named a field worker for the black conferences by the W.H.M.S. of the M.E. Church, South.
1904	A woman is arrested in New York for smoking a cigarette in public. Women are given laity rights and admitted to the M.E. General Conference as delegates.	1908	Ford Motor Company produces the first Model T. Mrs. M.C.B. Mason is named supervisor of the Bureau of Colored Deaconesses (M.E. Church, South). The Methodist Federation for Social Service prepares a Social Creed, which is adopted by the M.E. General Conference.
		1909	The Woman's Missionary Association (U.B.) becomes part of the General Board of Missions. Women gain wider and more

influential responsibilities as a result.

18,000 garment workers strike New York City's shirtwaist shops. Four out of five strikers are women. **Anna Howard Shaw** offers vocal support.

- 1910 **The Woman's Societies of the M.E. Church, South are joined under one Woman's Missionary Council and made part of the general missionary organization of the church. Belle Harris Bennett is president of the Council until 1922.**

The M.E. Church, South General Conference denies women laity rights.

One out of five wage earners is a woman. One out of four women over 14 is employed, as are one-quarter of children between 10 and 14.

The World Missionary Conference is held in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is organized.

- 1911 A disastrous fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York kills 146 women, but leads to improved laws regulating factory working conditions.

- 1912 Polish immigration to the U.S. peaks at nearly 175,00 during 1912-13; men outnumber women two to one.

Mellie Perkins begins work as a United Brethren missionary in Velarde, New Mexico.

- 1914 World War I begins.

Night-shift work for women is internationally forbidden.

- 1915 Margaret Sanger is jailed for writing *Family Limitation*, first book on birth control.

The Woman's Peace Party is organized and sends delegates to the International Congress of Women in The Hague.

- 1916 Prohibition gains ground as 24 states vote approval.

Jeanette Rankin (from Montana) is elected the first woman in the U.S. Congress.

- 1917 Bobbed hair as ladies' hair fashion sweeps Britain and the U.S.

Four women arrested for picketing the White House on behalf of women's suffrage are sentenced to six months in jail.

The U.S. enters the war.

- 1918 Armistice is signed November 11, ending the war.

- 1919 Prohibition amendment (the 18th) is ratified on January 16.

Race riots in Chicago reflect urban tension following large-scale migration of southern blacks to the North since 1900.

- 1920 Methodist women in Cuba begin organizing Woman's Missionary Societies during this decade.

The 19th Amendment gives women the vote.

Carrie Johnson is selected to head a standing committee of the Woman's Missionary Council (M.E. Church, South) to study the race question and develop ways for black and white women to work together, a task she continues until her death in 1929.

By 1920, half of all Americans live in cities.

The local preacher's license, first step to ordained ministry, is officially extended to women in the M.E. *Book of Discipline*.

- 1921 Ku Klux Klan activities become increasingly violent throughout the South.

Evan B. Dykes, Sadie T. Mossell, and Georgiana R. Simpson receive the first Ph.D degrees awarded to black women.

Emergency Quota Act limits immigration to the U.S.

Wesleyan Service Guild (M.E.) is organized for women employed outside the home.

Congressman Dyer of Missouri introduces a bill to make lynching a federal crime; it is introduced again in 1925 and 1927. Additional bills are unsuccessfully introduced through the 1930s.

The first federally funded health care program, the Sheppard-Towner Act, is passed. It is intended to reduce infant and maternal mortality.

- 1922 Insulin is first administered to diabetic patients.

First women seated as delegates at General Conference of the M.E. Church, South (18 women lay delegates).

The United Evangelical Church and the Evangelical Association reunite to form The Evangelical Church.

The Woman's Missionary Society of The Evangelical Church is organized.

- 1923 Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch in Munich fails.
- Daytona Normal and Industrial School merges with the Cookman Institute to form Bethune-Cookman College.**
- The National Woman's Party (organized in 1921) proposes an Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.
- First birth-control clinic opens in New York.
- 1924 **Methodist Episcopal women are given limited clergy rights ("local" ordination).**
- The Ku Klux Klan has four million members.
- The Immigration Act limits immigration to 2% of each national group in the U.S. in 1890, making the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 permanent.
- 1925 By now 13 states have passed anti-lynching laws.
- 1926 **Winifred Chappell, M.E. deaconess and editor of the *Social Service Bulletin* of the Methodist Federation for Social Service, covers the Passaic (NJ) worker's strike and begins a decade of reporting and interpreting working conditions in American industries.**
- 1927 Al Jolson makes "The Jazz Singer," the first "talking" motion picture.
- 1928 First scheduled television broadcasts, by WGY (Schenectady, New York).
- 1929 Stock exchange collapses on October 28, inaugurating the Great Depression.
- 1930 **The Woman's Missionary Council (M.E.C., South) sends Mrs. B.W. Lipscomb to organize women of two Spanish-speaking conferences (Texas-Mexico and Western Mexico).**
- The Bureau of Social Service of the Woman's Missionary Council (M.E.C., South) becomes the Bureau of Christian Social Relations with commissions on industrial relations, interracial, cooperation, and rural development under the leadership of Bertha Jewell.**
- 1931 Hattie T. Caraway, a Democrat from Arkansas, becomes the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate.
- The Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, led by **Jessie Daniel Ames (M.E. Church, South)**, is founded.
- 1933 Frances Perkins becomes the first woman Cabinet member (Secretary of Labor).

Concentration camps are first erected in Germany by the Nazis.

The 21st Amendment repeals Prohibition.

- 1935 Congress of Industrial Organizations founded by John L. Lewis.

Mary McLeod Bethune is named director of the Negro Division of the National Youth Administration, a position she holds until 1943. In 1935 she also becomes the first president of the National Council of Negro Women.

The Social Security Act provides maternal and child welfare benefits.

- 1937 U.S. Supreme Court rules in favor of a minimum wage law for women.

Government statistics show that 500,000 Americans were involved in sitdown strikes between September 1936 and May 1937.

- 1938 The Fair Labor Standards Act ensures minimum wages and maximum hours.

- 1939 War begins in Europe.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, the M.E. Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church merge to form The Methodist Church.

Mary McLeod Bethune and others oppose the formation of the Central Jurisdiction in the Methodist Plan of Union because it reinforces segregation.

The various women's home and foreign missionary societies and other women's groups of the three uniting churches are joined and become the Woman's Society of Christian Service. The Wesleyan Service Guild remains a separate organization.

Georgia Harkness, active M.E. leader and local elder, becomes professor of applied theology at Garrett Biblical Institute, the first woman to hold such a position at a major seminary.

- 1940 30 million U.S. homes have radio.

The Woman's Society of Christian Service, Central Jurisdiction, is formed.

Asociacion de Damas Evangelica de Puerto Rico is founded.

- 1941 The U.S. enters World War II; during the war, over six million women enter the American workforce for the first time, mostly in defense plants. The majority of these workers are married.

Executive Order #9066 uproots 110,000

	Americans of Japanese ancestry and places them in ten detention camps for the duration of World War II. Nearly half of the detainees are women.		Pacific Japanese Provisional Conference organize a Woman's Society of Christian Service.
1942	Sugar, coffee, and gasoline rationing are begun. The first computer is developed in the U.S.	1952	The Revised Standard Version of the Bible is published.
1943	Infantile paralysis epidemic kills almost 1200 in the U.S., cripples thousands more. Race riots break out in several major U.S. cities whose labor population has been bolstered by an influx of southern blacks.	1954	The Supreme Court rules that segregation by color in public schools violates the 14th Amendment. Army-McCarthy hearings result in Joseph McCarthy's formal censure and condemnation by the Senate. 29 million U.S. homes have televisions.
1944	The cost of living rises almost 30%. The Women's Division of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church forms a Committee on the Status of Women. The Methodist Church launches the Crusade for Christ. The Evangelical Church organizes the Christian Service Guild for employed women.		Billy Graham holds evangelistic meetings in New York, London, and Berlin. World Council of Churches convenes in Evanston, Illinois.
1945	V-E and V-J days signal the end of World War II.	1955	On December 1, Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man, and the modern civil rights movement is launched with the Montgomery (Alabama) bus boycott.
1946	The Evangelical United Brethren Church (E.U.B.) is formed from the merger of The Evangelical Church and the United Brethren in Christ. The first women delegates attend the General Conference of the Evangelical Church, then the joint E.U.B. General Conference immediately following (Irene Haumersen and Mrs. Edward Stukenberg). Women are denied ordination in the newly organized E.U.B. Church. With the formation of the E.U.B. Church, the women's organizations merge to become the Women's Society of World Service. The Christian Service Guild remains a separate entity until 1958.	1956	Oral vaccine against polio is developed by Albert Sabin. Women in The Methodist Church win full clergy rights; Maud Keister Jensen is the first woman to be granted such rights. The World Federation of Methodist Women is formed.
1949	Dorothy Rogers Tilly , Methodist laywoman and member of President Truman's Commission on Civil Rights, founds the Fellowship of the Conference, an interracial group dedicated to seeking courtroom justice for blacks in the South.	1957	The U.S.S.R. launches Sputnik I and II, the first earth satellites.
1950	The National Council of Churches is organized. The Oriental Provision Conference of The Methodist Church is organized. Early in the decade, Nisei women of the	1960	President Kennedy establishes the Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt.
		1961	"Freedom Riders," black and white liberals loosely organized to test and force integration in the South, are attacked and beaten in Anniston and Birmingham. The New English Bible is introduced.
		1962	James Meredith, backed by U.S. marshals and 3,000 soldiers, enrolls in the University of Mississippi. Rachel Carson's book, <i>Silent Spring</i> , launches the ecology movement.
		1963	Betty Friedan publishes <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> . Race riots erupt in a number of U.S. cities as reaction against enforcement of civil rights laws.
		1965	Demonstrations against U.S. military

	involvement in Vietnam increase as involvement escalates.		Commission on the Status and Role of Women is also established and funded.
	The Immigration Act alters American immigration policy from one based on ethnic origin to one based on employable skills and family situations.		The military draft is phased out; the U.S. armed forces become all-volunteer.
	Martin Luther King leads 4,000 civil rights marchers from Selma to Montgomery.	1973	The Supreme Court rules that individual states may not prohibit abortions during the first six months of pregnancy.
1966	The National Organization for Women (NOW) is organized.	1974	Richard Nixon resigns the Presidency.
1967	Margaret Henrichsen (Maine Methodist Annual Conference) is the first American woman district superintendent.	1975	The U.S. ends two decades of military involvement in Vietnam.
	NOW resurrects the Equal Rights Amendment, shelved by Congress since the early 1950s.		The first United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation is held in Nashville, Tennessee.
			First Women's Bank opens in New York City.
1968	The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren merge to form The United Methodist Church.	1976	U.S. Air Force Academy admits 155 women, ending the all-male tradition at military academies.
	Full clergy rights for women are affirmed by the new United Methodist Church.		Ten women are elected as the first women clergy delegates to the United Methodist General Conference.
	The women's organizations of The Methodist Church and the E.U.B. Church are merged in the new United Methodist Church under the names Women's Society of Christian Service and Wesleyan Service Guild.	1978	Women's History Project of the General Commission on Archives and History is established, the first in any denomination.
1969	U.S. begins withdrawal of troops from Vietnam.	1980	Marjorie Matthews is the first woman to be elected bishop of The United Methodist Church.
	American astronauts land on the moon.	1982	The Equal Rights Amendment is defeated, three states short of ratification.
1970	U.S. census shows smallest number of men (94.8) in ratio to women (100) in history.	1983	Marjorie Suchoki (an Episcopalian) is selected as the first woman Dean of a United Methodist seminary (Wesley Theological Seminary).
	The Women's Strike for Equality commemorates the victory of woman suffrage in 1920.	1984	Judith Craig and Leontine Kelly become the second and third woman bishops of The United Methodist Church. Kelly is the first black woman bishop of the church.
1971	Cigarette advertisements are banned from U.S. television.	1985	First Hispanic women's consultation in The United Methodist Church takes place.
	From 1971 to 1974, Congress enacts numerous pieces of equal rights legislation.	1988	Susan Morrison and Sharon Brown Christopher become United Methodist bishops.
	Women's organizations in The United Methodist Church merge to form United Methodist Women.	1990	Fifty women serve The United Methodist Church as district superintendents.
	"The Jesus Movement" becomes a much-publicized element of religion in America.	2002	Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher elected first woman president of the Council of Bishops of the UM Church.
1972	The Watergate scandal begins.	2005	Rosemarie Wenner was elected bishop for the Germany Episcopal Area in 2005, becoming the first woman bishop to serve outside the United States and in 2014 was
	Congress enacts an Ethnic Heritage Studies Bill.		
	General Conference ratifies the formation of United Methodist Women. The General		

elected as president of the Council of Bishops.

- 2008 Barack Hussein Obama II is elected 44th president of the United States and is the first African American to hold that office.
- 2014 **Clergywomen represent 21.5 percent of more than 26,000 pastors-in-charge, about 1% serve as senior clergy in churches with 1,000-plus members, compared to 6% for men. About 15% of female elders are district superintendents. The UM Church has elected 21 women bishops, 16 of whom are active.**

Names and events highlighted in bold type relate specifically to the history of women in the Wesleyan and United Methodist tradition.



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The United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940
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