

CHRONOLOGY of CHURCH UNITY and DIVISIONS

- 313 Constantine at Milan issues Edict of Toleration
legalizing Christianity throughout Roman Empire.
- 325 Council of Nicea I (1st Ecumenical Council): Arianism condemned.
- 381 Council of Constantinople I (2nd Ecumenical Council):
creed of Nicea reaffirmed; Macedonianism and Apollinarianism condemned.
- 395 Roman empire permanently divided: western empire ruled from Rome,
eastern from Constantinople.
- 410 Synod of Seleucia uniting Persian and Greek churches.
- 431 Council of Ephesus (3rd Ecumenical Council): Nestorius patriarch of Constantinople
condemned as heretic, also Pelagianism.
- 451 Council of Chalcedon (4th Ecumenical Council): Tome of Leo approved,
definition of faith against Apollinarianism, Nestorianism and Eutychianism.
After Chalcedon, Copts of Egypt divided, most becoming Monophysites.
- 490 Assyrian church in Persia declares itself Nestorian,
opposing churches of Roman empire.
- 553 Council of Constantinople II (5th Ecumenical Council):
Three Chapters controversy.
- 680 Council of Constantinople III (6th Ecumenical Council):
Monothelitism condemned.
- 787 Council of Nicea II (7th Ecumenical Council, last recognized by Eastern Orthodox):
iconoclasm condemned.
- 800 Charlemagne crowned Roman emperor in Rome by pope.
- 869 Council of Constantinople IV: Photian schism condemned.
- 962 Holy Roman Empire founded by Otto I, king of Germany, crowned by pope John XII.
- 1054 Great Schism between western Latin (Rome) and eastern
Greek (Constantinople) Christianity.
- 1100 Armenian church split by Paulician separatists.
- 1166 Waldensian movement begins under reformer Peter Waldo at Lyons.
- 1170 Albigenses or Cathari “puritans” develop in southern France.
- 1208 20,000 Albigensians massacred as heretics at papal order.
- 1215 Council of Lateran IV: against Waldensians, Albigensians, et al.
- 1219 Independent Serbian Orthodox Church formed.
- 1350 Rupture between European church in East and West finally complete.
- 1357 Maronite Church, which had separated from Greek Orthodoxy
in 7th century, unites with Rome.
- 1380 Wycliffe’s New Testament and Lollards, England.
- 1384 Wycliffe’s Old Testament.
- 1400 Hussites, Bohemia.
- 1414 Council of Constance: condemnation of reformers Wycliffe, Huss, et al.
- 1415 Huss burned at stake as heretic.
- 1498 Savonarola, Reformation in Florence.
- 1517 Martin Luther’s 95 Theses nailed to church door in Wittenberg:
Protestant Reformation begins.

- 1519 Huldreich Zwingli installed as people's priest in Zurich;
reformation spreads across Switzerland.
- 1525 30,000 Anabaptists in Europe executed
(by Catholics and Lutherans, later by Calvinists).
- 1527 First Baptist church established in Zurich.
- 1534 British Supremacy Act makes British monarch
(then Henry VIII) head of Church of England.
- 1536 John Calvin as reformer in Geneva: 1538 banished,
1541 returns to make it center of Reformed faith.
Denmark, Norway, Sweden adopt Lutheranism as state religion by 1540.
- 1537 English king declared head of church in Ireland.
- 1545 Augsburg Confession adopted by Hungarian Lutheran church.
Council of Trent (Counter Reformation) 19th Ecumenical Council:
Protestantism condemned. 25 sessions 1545-1563 during lives of 3 popes.
- 1547 Severe persecution of Protestants in France: 72,000 executed.
- 1550 Lutheranism proclaimed state religion of Iceland.
- 1553 Roman Catholicism restored in England under queen Mary; 300 Reformed leaders
including Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury burned at stake.
In 3 years, 300 Protestants burned as heretics in Europe.
- 1557 France: 33% of population reputed to be Protestants (known as Huguenots).
1559 create Reformed Church (72 congregations, 400,000 adherents).
- 1559 John Knox, Presbyterian Church, Scotland.
- 1560 Anabaptists the only Reformation grouping
to deliberately work for and obey Jesus' Great Commission,
especially through Hutterian Brethren's itinerant evangelism.
- 1562 3,000 French Protestants (Huguenots) massacred at Toulouse.
- 1566 First Unitarian churches founded: in Hungary, Rumania, Poland.
- 1572 70,000 Huguenots massacred in France.
- 1607 First Anglican worship in Virginia.
- 1616 First Baptist congregation in England (London): known as General Baptists.
- 1620 Pilgrim Fathers from England cross Atlantic to America to found New England.
(Separatist Congregationalists)
Bohemia forcibly made Roman Catholic by Austrian armies:
30,000 Protestants expelled.
- 1626 First Dutch Reformed worship in New Netherlands.
- 1628 Dutch in New York organize first Christian Reformed Church on Manhattan island.
(Reformed Protestant Dutch Church) In 1867 "Dutch" omitted, became
"The Reformed Church in America."
Another is called German Reformed; another the Christian Reformed, in 1834;
another "The True Reformed Church."
- 1639 Roger Williams founds first Baptist church in USA.
First Lutheran worship in New Sweden.
- 1647 Quakers develop from teaching of George Fox, England.
- 1654 Puritans oppose Anglicans in England, driven to exile.
- 1660 Britain: 13,000 Quakers imprisoned under Charles II from 1660-1685.
- 1662 Schism ex Church of England: 300,000 communicants follow ministers
ejected under Act of Uniformity.

- 1675 Germany: Lutheran Pietism and missionary outreach begun, led by Philip Spencer.
West Jersey becomes the first Quaker colony.
- 1690 Mennonites establish separate worship.
- 1700 2,000 Quakers from England settle in Pennsylvania.
Wittgenstein revival movement in Germany.
Swabian Pietistic Fathers (Germany)
- 1702 Congo: first attempt to found church independent of Rome in Black Africa.
- 1706 USA: Presbyterians form first organized church;
origin of Presbyterian Church in USA.
- 1722 Moravian Pietism begun, led by Zinzendorf.
- 1723 First Dunker church organized.
- 1725 First German Reformed church organized.
- 1734 The Great Awakening, revival in New England (USA).
- 1738 Conversion of John Wesley at Aldersgate (UK);
beginning of 18th century Evangelical Revival
and rise of Methodism under Wesley.
- 1758 Old-Side-New Side division among Presbyterians.
- 1766 First Methodist society in New World formed in North America.
- 1767 Church of Brethren in Christ, America.
- 1773 First independent USA Black Baptist congregation formed near Augusta, Georgia.
- 1778 USA Universalists organize their first church.
- 1783 Eclectic Society and Clapham Sect formed in England.
- 1784 Methodist Church established at Christmas Conference in Baltimore.
- 1785 Protestant Episcopal King's Chapel in Boston
becomes Unitarian Church in New England.
- 1787 First USA Black Methodist dissidents appear, with
officially-organized African Methodist Episcopal Church emerging by 1816.
Free Will Baptists organized, New Hampshire.
- 1789 Large colonies of German Mennonites and farmers
settle in Black Earth region of Russia; origin of Sundists.
- 1794 James O'Kelly forms "Christians" in Virginia.
- 1795 London Missionary Society (LMS) founded
(inter-denominational, later Congregationalist).
Methodists in Britain separate from Church of England
after John Wesley's death in 1791.
- 1796 Unitarians organize first church.
- 1804 Christian Church, Cane Ridge, Kentucky.
- 1806 Napoleon abolishes Holy Roman Empire.
Britain: revivals secede from Methodism--1806
Independent Methodists, 1810 Camp Meeting Methodists,
joining in 1812 as Primitive Methodists.
- 1809 "Christian Association" formed by Thomas Campbell in Pennsylvania.
- 1810 Britain: 312,000 Nonconformists (including 30,000 Particular or Exclusive Baptists).
- 1810 American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
organized (USA Congregationalists).
- 1815 Many Congregational churches become Unitarian.
Unitarian defection from Congregationalists in Massachusetts.

- 1827 John Darby, Anglican clergyman, begins Brethren movement in Dublin.
Quakers separate into Orthodox Friends and Hicksites.
- 1830 Joseph Smith at Fayette, NY (USA), has visions which lead to establishment of
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons).
- 1831 Christians or Christian Church merges with Congregationalists.
- 1832 Disciples of Christ unite with Christian Church.
(Different from Christian Church of 1831 merger)
- 1844 Seventh-day Adventist movement begun in USA.
Christadelphians founded by John Thomas in Birmingham (UK) and London.
- 1844 Methodist Episcopal Church has many divisions over political rivalries and slavery.
In 1939 Uniting Conference formed The Methodist Church from
The Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,
and the Methodist Protestant Church.
- 1845 Southern Baptist Convention formed.
Methodist and Baptists divide over slavery.
- 1846 World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) formed in London
to further unity among Evangelicals worldwide.
Mormons under Brigham Young leave Nauvoo City for Great Salt Lake.
- 1857 Christian Reformed secession from Dutch Reformed Church.
- 1865 Salvation Army founded by William Booth in England.
- 1867 Archbishop of Canterbury convenes first decennial Lambeth Conference
of all bishops of Anglican Communion (London).
American branch of Evangelical Alliance formed.
- 1869 Council of Vatican I, in Rome: papal infallibility defined,
widening gulf between Rome and rest of Christendom.
- 1870 Bible Students (then called Watch Tower) began in USA through Charles T. Russell.
- 1875 Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presbyterian): first confessional council formed
(London) 1970, as WARC, merger with International Congregational Council.
- 1876 World Methodist Conference (WMC) founded.
- 1879 First Church of Christ, Scientist, founded in Boston by Mary Baker Eddy
as worldwide movement centering on spiritual healing.
- 1881 Shakerism and Indian Shaker Church begun by John Slocum
among Puget Sound Amerindians.
- 1886 Church of God (Cleveland) begun as study and fellowship group in Cleveland,
Tennessee; later became first Pentecostal church in USA, from 1906.
- 1889 Largest USA non-Chalcedonian church established: Armenian Church
of North America, under Catholicate of Echmiadzin.
Evangelical United Brethren Church division between "Radicals" and "Liberals."
Christian Socialist Society formed.
- 1893 National Spiritualist Association of Churches founded in USA.
World Parliament of Religions, in Chicago.
- 1895 Church of God in Christ formed in USA; later became Black Pentecostals.
- 1897 USA: largest Catholic (non-Roman) church established:
Polish National Catholic Church, formed over conflict
between Polish Catholics and Irish Catholic hierarchy.
- 1901 Pentecostalism in USA begun at Topeka Bible College (Kansas).
- 1908 Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

- 1910 World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, Scotland
(previously called 3rd Ecumenical Missionary Conference until 1980 change):
1,355 delegates; beginning of the 20th century ecumenical movement.
- 1917 True Jesus Church begun in China, a charismatic schism
ex Apostolic Faith Movement.
- 1918 Fundamentalism/modernism controversy erupts within USA Protestantism,
until 1931, splitting every major denomination; premillennialism now a
major part of all revivalist preaching.
- 1919 World's Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA) founded in New York:
premillennialist Protestants opposing modernism: active until 1950s.
- 1922 Interchurch World Movement.
- 1938 World Council of Churches 'in process of formation,' Utrecht, Netherlands.
- 1939 Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist E. C. South, and
Methodist Protestant Church unite to form the Methodist Church.
- 1941 National Council of Churches in New Zealand founded.
- 1942 British Council of Churches (BCC) founded.
- 1944 Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) founded.
- 1946 African Orthodox Church (independent Kenyan body) accepted into communion
by Greek Orthodox patriarchate of Alexandria.
Australian Council of Churches (ACC) begun.
United Bible Societies (UBS) formed as a federation and fellowship
of autonomous Bible societies.
Union between Evangelical Church and Church of the United Brethren in Christ.
- 1947 5th Meeting of International Missionary Council, Whitby, Toronto, Canada;
112 delegates from 40 countries.
Conference on Evangelism, Geneva, sponsored by WCC in formation (February).
Church of South India inaugurated by merger of Methodists and Anglicans
with earlier-united Reformed and Congregationalist bodies.
2nd World Conference of Christian Youth, Oslo, Norway.
Lutheran World Federation (LWF) founded; 1st assembly at Lund, Sweden.
1st Pentecostal World Conference, Zurich, Switzerland.
- 1948 Byzantine Rite Uniate Catholic Church of Romania dissolved by a few priests,
rejoining Romanian Orthodox Church.
Kirchenkreis-Evangelization begun in Germany.
World Council of Churches (WCC) inaugurated at Amsterdam
by 147 churches from 44 countries; 351 delegates and 238 alternates.
- 1949 2nd Pentecostal World Conference, Paris.
Joint IMC/WCC Conference, in preparation for forming of EACC,
in Bangkok, Thailand.
Organized churches present in all countries of the world
except Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and Tibet.
1st Latin American Evangelical Conference (CELA 1) Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 1950 1st Assembly of World Council of Christian Education
and Sunday School Association (WCESSA), Toronto, Canada.
- 1951 World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) formed at Zeist, Netherlands.
- 1954 2nd Assembly of World Council of Churches, in Evanston.

- 1957 National Patriotic Catholic Association formed in China; anti-Vatican.
General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches
and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church
merge to form the United Church of Christ.
- 1960 Smaller Lutheran bodies form the United Lutheran Church
and the American Lutheran Church.
- 1961 3rd Assembly of WCC, in New Delhi, India; integration of WCC and IMC, latter
emerging as 'Division of World Mission and Evangelism' (DWME and CWME).
2nd Latin American Evangelical Conference (CELA II), Lima, Peru.
- 1962 Vatican Council II (21st Ecumenical Council, for Roman Catholics)
meets in Rome, 1962-65: 2,200 attending RC bishops.
- 1964 Meeting in Jerusalem of Paul VI and Athenagoras, of Constantinople,
first meeting of pope and ecumenical patriarch in 900 years.
Fiji Council of Churches founded.
- 1965 Oriental Orthodox Churches Conference, in Addis Ababa;
first conference of heads of Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian and Syrian churches.
Rome and Constantinople withdraw mutual excommunication of AD 1054.
- 1966 Christian Council of Botswana begun.
Evangelical Congress on 'The Church's Worldwide Mission,'
Wheaton, IL, USA (April).
World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin: 'One race, one gospel, one task':
1,200 delegates from 100 countries.
Total elimination of religion begun in Albania as world's first atheist state.
- 1967 Catholic charismatic renewal begun, first at Duquesne University, USA.
- 1968 Major schisms occur in Pakistan among Presbyterians, Methodists and Anglicans,
influenced by ICCC.
4th Assembly of WCC, in Uppsala, Sweden: 'Behold, I make all things new;'
2,741 participants (704 delegates, 750 press).
- 1969 Szigorsk Conference of All Religions in the USSR.
Paul VI first pope to visit World Council of Churches, Geneva.
African indigenous churches (AICM) now number over 5,800 denominations,
with 17 million adherents growing by 960,000 each year.
- 1970 Church of North India inaugurated through merger of Anglican, Baptist, Brethren,
Disciples, Methodist and United churches.
WCC allocates first grants to 19 anti-racist organizations throughout world
for humanitarian work.
- 1971 World Assembly of World Council of Christian Education, Lima, Peru;
1972, WCCE integrated in WCC.
- 1972 1st Ecumenical Pentecost Meeting in Augsburg (Germany)
for Catholics and Protestants (June).
- 1976 World Congress of Fundamentalists: first 8-day USA-dominated meeting
in Edinburgh: 2,000 attend.
- 1977 1st Conference on the Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches: ecumenical,
embracing all pentecostal traditions, in Kansas City, USA: 50,000 present (July).
- 1979 Moral Majority founded by Jerry Falwell.
- 1981 Institute on Religion and Democracy is founded.
- 1982 Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics.

- 1986 Chicago Statement on Biblical Application.
A written statement of belief formulated by more than 200 evangelical leaders.
- 1988 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America founded.
- 1992 New Catechism of the Catholic Church published.
Summarizes the Catholic Church's doctrine. Promulgated by Pope John Paul II.
- 1993 Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference founded.
An international fellowship of 34 Confessional Lutheran church bodies.
- 1999 Signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification
between the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church (October 31).
- 2000 Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ founded in schism
from Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
over fellowship with the Episcopal Church.
- 2005 United Church of Christ becomes first protestant denomination to support same-sex
marriage in the U.S., and one of the first denominations worldwide to do so.
- 2006 World Methodist Council votes unanimously to adopt the Joint Declaration
on the Doctrine of Justification.
- 2007 Russian Orthodox Church is reunified after 80 years of schism
with Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, a formerly True Orthodox sect
that officially became semi-Autonomous.
- 2009 Anglican Church in North America is founded by former Episcopalian churches.
- 2010 Lutheran CORE creates North American Lutheran Church in schism from the ELCA.
- 2016 The Pan-Orthodox Council at Crete (June 19 – June 26).
A synod of set representative bishops of the universally recognised autocephalous
local churches of the Eastern Orthodox Church.
- 2018 Russian Orthodox Church announces break in relations with the Ecumenical
Patriarchate of Constantinople over objections of communion with the formerly
noncanonical Ukrainian Orthodox Churches.