

*Celebrating the*  
**BIRTH** *of the*

**Christian Methodist  
Episcopal Church**



In celebration of Founders' Day, we present the following presentation.

*Come, let's celebrate!*

*The Establishment of the*

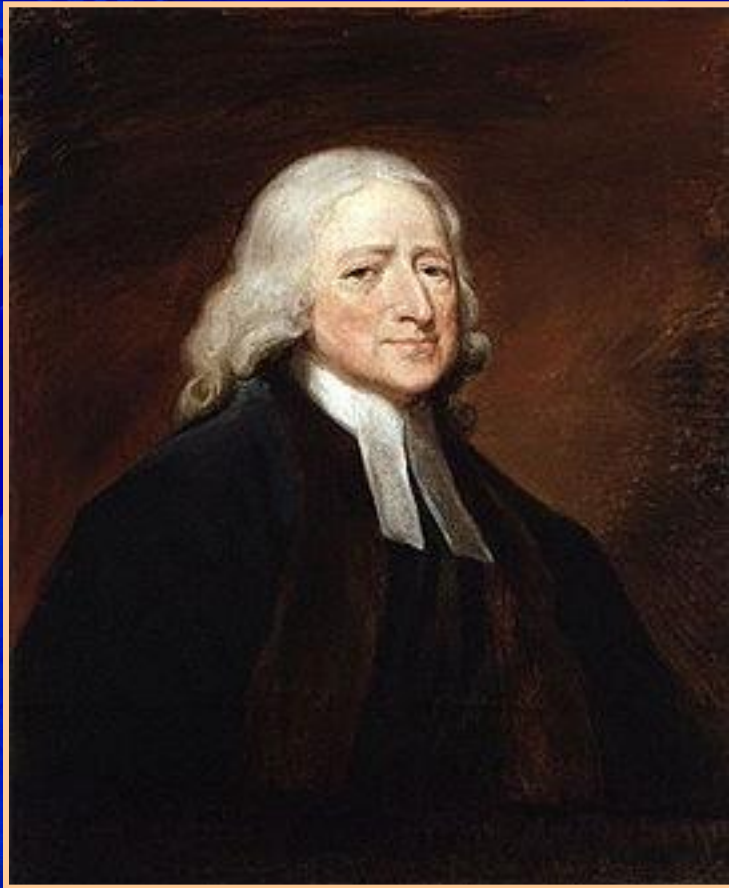
**CHRISTIAN  
METHODIST  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH**

# PURPOSE

This presentation is designed for members and non-members who want to gain, increase or refresh their basic knowledge of the establishment of the CME Church.

We hope that after viewing this presentation, the viewer will have a better understanding of the CME Church and be able to discuss the history of Methodism and the establishment of the CME Church.

# FOUNDER OF METHODISM



John Wesley  
(1703-1791)

John Wesley was born to Samuel and Susanna Wesley in Epworth, Lincolnshire. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were ministers in the Anglican Church in England. His mother was the daughter of a minister.



John and his brother, Charles, attended the University of Oxford in London, England. While there they formed the Holy Club in 1729.

The Holy Club met regularly to study the Bible and pray together for encouragement and spiritual growth.

The Holy Club had the following ministries:

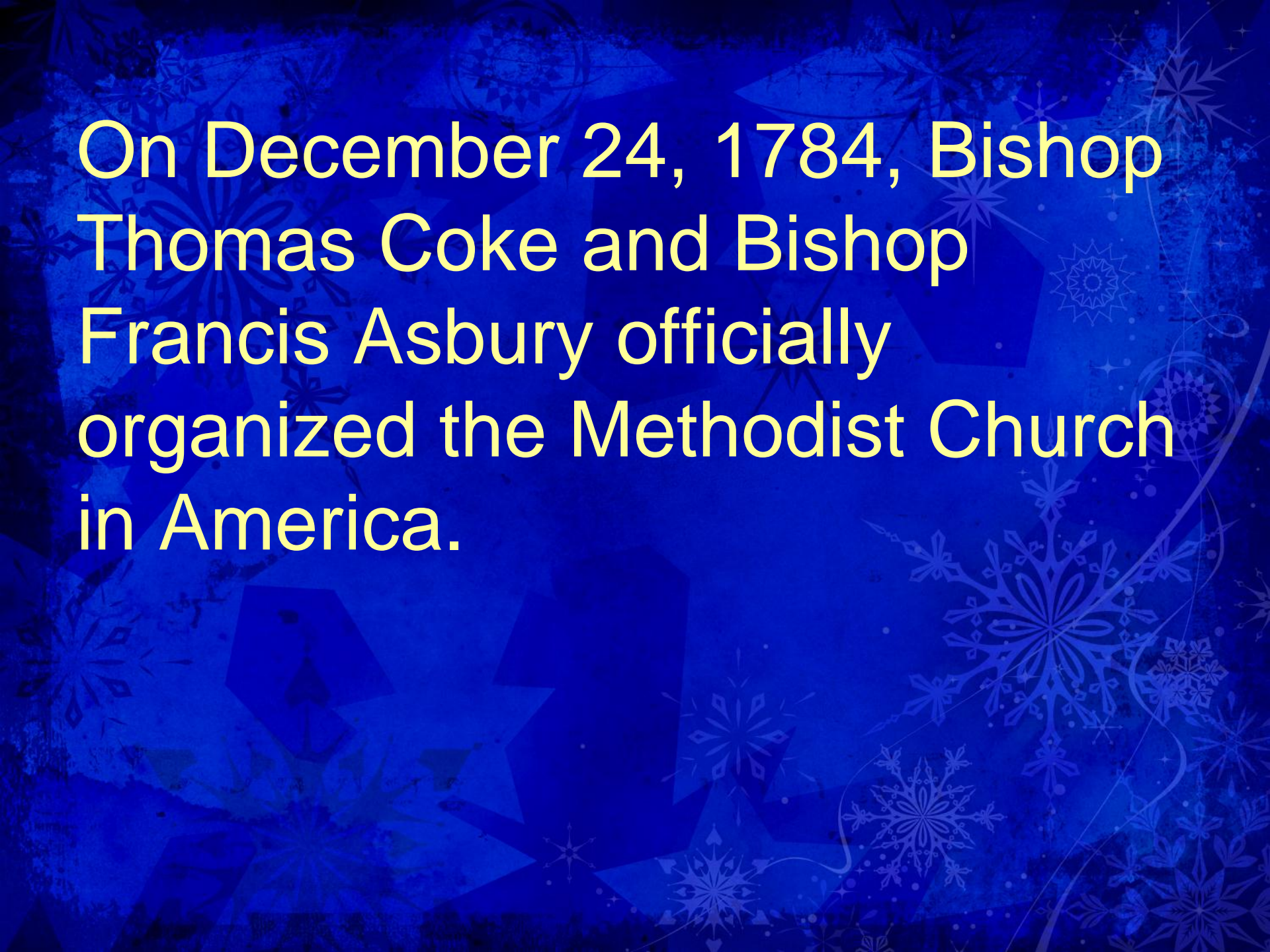
- Prison Ministry
- Food and clothing ministry
- Distributed medicine and books
- Ran school for the poor

Because of their method of study and devotion, Wesley and his club were called Methodist in a demeaning manner but they took the name as a compliment and kept it.

In 1739 “Methodist” became their official name.

# METHODISM ORGANIZED IN AMERICA

In 1784 John Wesley consecrated the first two Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Francis Asbury and Bishop Thomas Coke.



On December 24, 1784, Bishop Thomas Coke and Bishop Francis Asbury officially organized the Methodist Church in America.

At the Conference, a strong stand was made against slavery. No Methodist preachers were allowed to own slaves. Later, the ME Church split over the slavery issue.

At the General Conference of 1844, because of the dispute between the North and the South on the slavery issue, the ME Church agreed to form two denominations.



The two denominations formed were:

1. Methodist Episcopal Church (ME Church) (northern branch)
2. Methodist Episcopal Church, South (ME Church, South) (southern branch)

The ME Church was anti-slavery and the ME Church, South, was pro-slavery.

# PLANS MADE TO ESTABLISH THE CME CHURCH

In 1865, the Civil War ended and Blacks in the South were freed. This created a problem for the ME Church, South – the Blacks wanted their own and separate Methodist denomination in the South.

At the 1866 General Conference of the ME Church, South, held in New Orleans, Louisiana, the decision to organize the church into separate Colored conferences so that the body could form what the legislation called, “their own jurisdiction”; it was misleading.

In fact, AME representatives were present in 1866 and "asked for" the Colored members; the Minutes make it look like the answer was yes, but later the conference decided to form these separate Colored conferences.

It was in the 1870 General Conference that the authorization to meet in December and "establish" came - but even then, there is a suspicion in the record (because of the word "jurisdiction") that the sense of "independence" came later from the Blacks within the ME Church, South, rather than the Whites in General Conference.

## Pre-requisites of the setup

- 1) A sincere commitment of the leadership of the ME Church, South.
- 2) A strong desire of the Colored members to have their own separate church.

# Requirements for the Setup

- 1) Authority/Directions from General Conference of ME Church, South
- 2) Administrative actions be made by Bishops of the ME Church, South



- 
- The background is a deep blue color with a pattern of white and light blue snowflakes and geometric shapes. The snowflakes vary in size and complexity, some appearing as simple stars and others as intricate, multi-pointed designs. The overall effect is a textured, wintry aesthetic.
- 3) Active Participation of Colored Members
  - 4) Have separate Colored Pastoral Charges
  - 5) Colored Ministers be properly ordained and licensed

## 6) Organize separate Colored Conferences

- Quarterly
- District
- Annual

# ME Church, South, General Conference Provisions

1. Final approval for the establishment of a completely separate and independent church for Colored members.

2. Authority to transfer property held by the ME Church, South, to the Colored Church when it was organized.

3. Set December 16, 1870, as the date at the General Conference that would organize the new Colored Church.

4. Appoint an official delegation to assist the Colored members in setting up their own Church.

# Conferences Organized

The planners organized the first Colored Conferences as directed by the organizing Conference of 1866.

1867

Memphis Colored Conference

November 20-24

Jackson, Tennessee

1868

Kentucky Colored Conference

November 20

Hopkinsville, Kentucky



1869

Mississippi Colored Conference

January 7-9

Hazelhurst, Mississippi

1869

Georgia Colored Conference

January 6

Augusta, Georgia

1869

Alabama Colored Conference

November 25-26

Talladega, Alabama

# CME CHURCH ESTABLISHED

December 15-21, 1870, former slave members of the Methodist Episcopal (ME) Church, South, gathered to organize their own separate and independent church in Jackson, Tennessee.

On December 15, delegates gathered at the ward for Colored Methodists of the First Methodist Episcopal Church South in Jackson, Tennessee.

This ward was established in 1848 and was called Liberty Station which became known as the first CME Church and is now known as Mother Liberty.

Delegates for all Colored Conferences were asked to come on December 15 for spiritual encourage and instructions before the beginning of the business session of the Conference.

# Order of Business

On December 16, 1870, the General Conference of the ME Church, South, began to establish the CME Church at First ME Church, South, in Jackson, Tennessee.

- ME Church, South, Bishop Robert Paine – Presided
- ME Church, South, General Conference procedures were followed



- Elect delegates from each Colored Conference. Forty-one (41) former slaves were elected.

In the delegation were...

William H. Miles  
(Kentucky reserved  
("alternate") delegate

Richard H. Vanderhorst  
(Georgia delegate)

- Standing Committees were determined to present items to the Conference for approval

*(The Committee on Church Organization brought before the General Conference the Resolution for the naming of the Colored church).*

# The Resolution

Whereas the Methodist Episcopal Church in America was the name first given to the Methodist Church by its Founder Mr. John Wesley; and

Whereas we are a part of the same Church never having seceded or separated from the Church, but in the division of the Church in 1844, we regularly belonged to the South, and now as we belong to the Colored race, we simply prefix our color to the name as we are in fact a part of the original Church and as old as any in America.

Therefore, Resolved that our name be the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

# Other Actions of Conference

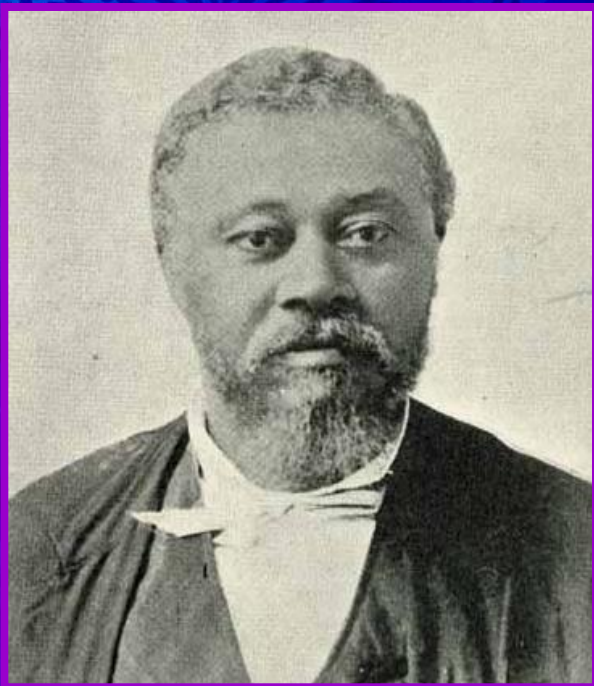
- *The Book of Discipline* was adopted
- Location of the Publishing House be in Memphis, TN

- Continuation of *The Christian Index* as the official publication of the CME Church
- Reappointment of the Editor and appointment of the Assistant Editor for *The Christian Index*

# **Election of the First CME Bishops**

**Tuesday, December 21, 1870  
ME Church, South, Bishop  
McTyeire, Presiding**

**10:00 a.m. the election of  
Bishops began**



Bishop William H. Miles

1<sup>st</sup> Ballot - 40 votes cast

**Bishop William H. Miles**

Elected first Bishop with 27 votes

2<sup>nd</sup> Ballot – no majority

3<sup>rd</sup> Ballot

**Richard H. Vanderhorst**

Elected second Bishop with 26 votes



**It Is Finished!**

Final actions of the organizing  
General Conference for the  
establishment of the CME  
Church....

1. Consecration of Bishops Miles and Vanderhorst
2. Transfer of Episcopal authority to the new Bishops of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America

# Name Revised

In 1930, the words “In America” were dropped from the original name.

In the 1954 General Conference, the Church voted to change its name. Because it was a constitutional question, it had to be voted on in the annual conferences.

“...the name of the Church became officially known as the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, January 19, 1956.”

*[page 377 of the 1958 Discipline]*

The background is a deep blue with a complex, layered pattern. It features various snowflake designs in different sizes and orientations, some appearing as faint outlines and others as more prominent, detailed shapes. There are also geometric patterns, including a large, faint outline of a Christmas tree in the center. The overall texture is rich and festive, typical of a winter holiday theme.

**CONFERENCES**

*of the*

**CHRISTIAN METHODIST**

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

# Church Conference

Meets monthly to agree on the local church's actions and policies. It is composed of all the members of the local church and the pastor presides.

# Quarterly Conference

It meets twice a year to give leadership to the local church.

It is comprised of the officers of the church, the pastor, local preachers and the Presiding Elder presides.



# District Conference

It is a group of delegates from local churches in a specific geographical area and the Presiding Elder presides.

# Annual Conference

It is a group comprised of preachers in full connection and delegates from local churches in a Presiding Elder's district and the Bishop of that Episcopal District presides.

## **General Conference**

This is a group of delegates from each Region across the Connection who gather to approve the laws and regulations of the Church. This is the Legislative Branch. It meets every four years and the Bishops rotate presiding on a daily basis.

We hope you have enjoyed celebrating with us the establishment of the CME Church.

Let's continue the celebration by enjoying a game of **“KNOW THE CME CHURCH”!**

# REFERENCES

1. The Holy Bible
2. Henry, Matthew and Scott, Thomas. Commentary on the Holy Bible. Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville – Camden – New York, 1979.
3. Butler, Trent C. (General Editor). Holman Bible Dictionary, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1991.
4. Gilmore, Marshall (Editor). Book of Ritual (New and Revised), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. The Department of Publications, CME Church, Memphis, TN, 1995.
5. Lakey, Othal Hawthorn. The History of the CME Church (Revised). CME Publishing House, Memphis, TN, 1996.
6. Charles E. Winfrey, Sr., Lecture Series to the Nashville/Clarksville District, 2002-2004.
7. *The Book of Discipline of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, 1958, 2006*
8. Merriweather, Russell D. *A Call to Witness: History of the Southeast District*, Published by Westview, Inc., Publishers. Nashville, TN, 2009.
9. Strong, James. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA
10. Vine, W.E. Vine's Exposition Dictionary of New Testament Words. Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA
11. Crutchfield, Carmichael. Membership Manual. Department of Christian Education, CME Church.
12. [www/c-m-e.org](http://www/c-m-e.org)
13. Bishop Lawrence L. Reddick III, Senior Bishop of the CME Church