

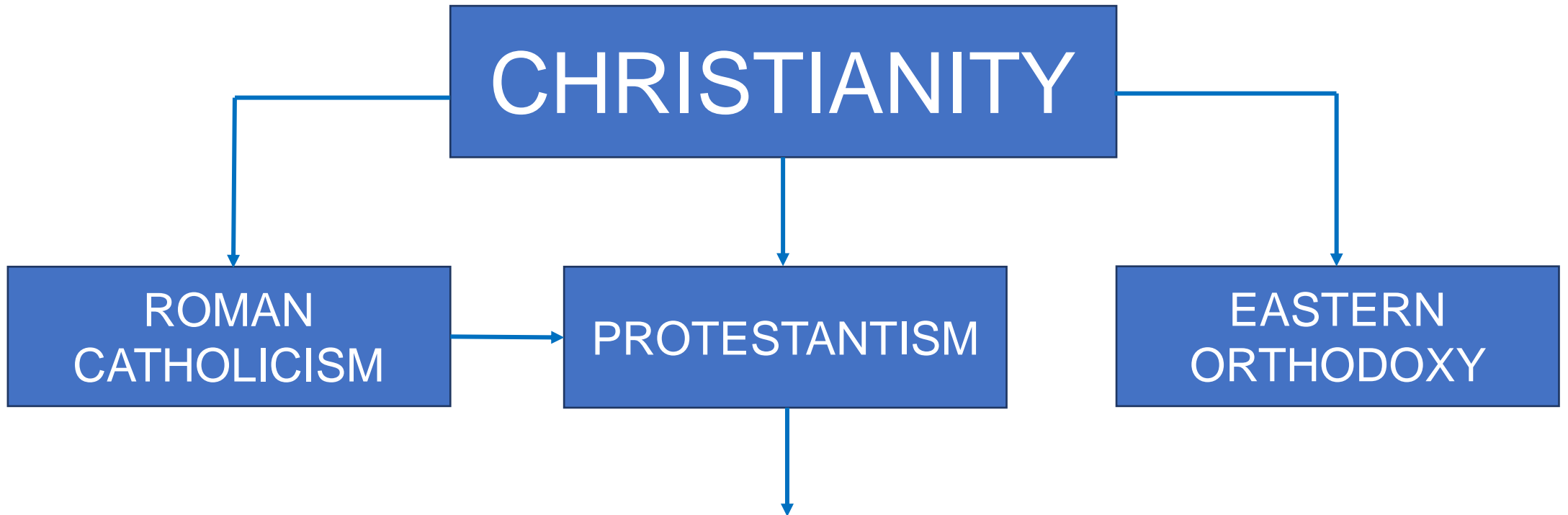
INTRODUCTION TO FAIRVIEW CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

METHODIST HISTORY

STARTING AT THE BEGINNING...

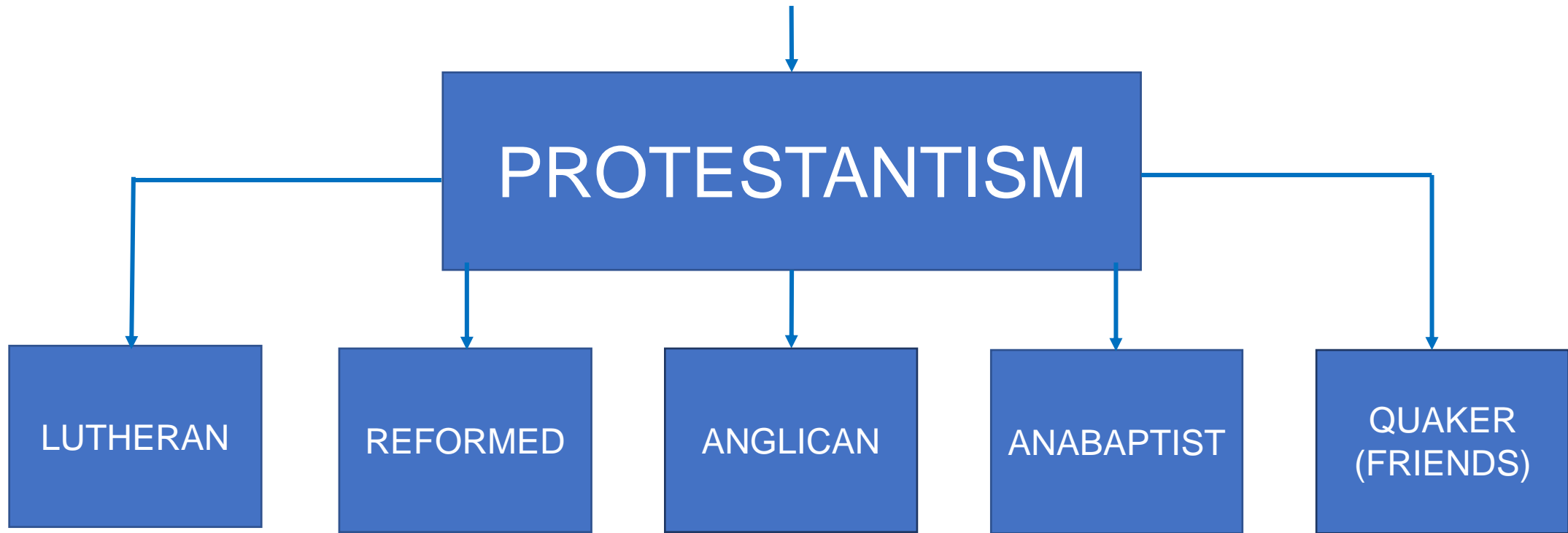
CHRISTIANITY

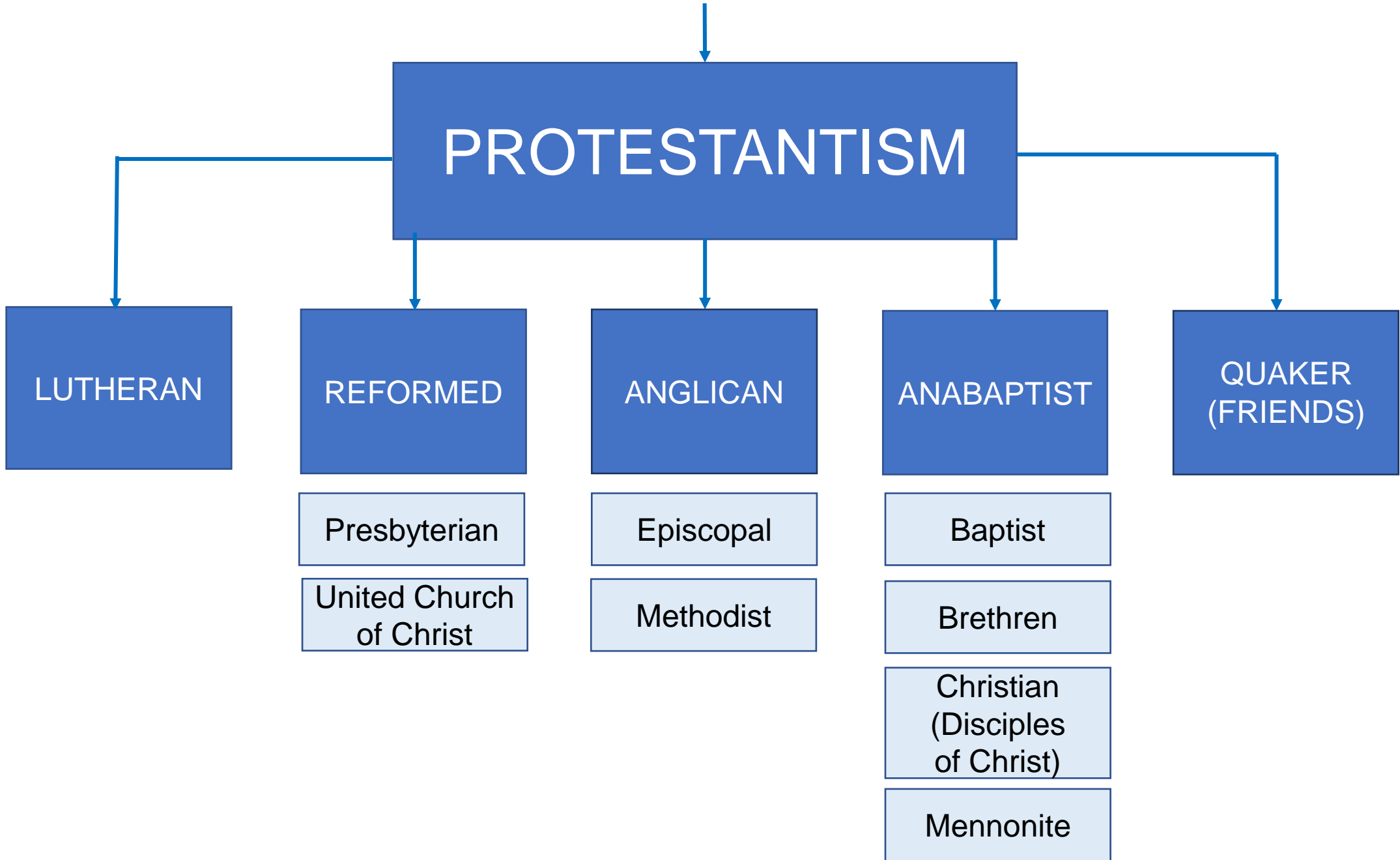
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PROTESTANTISM







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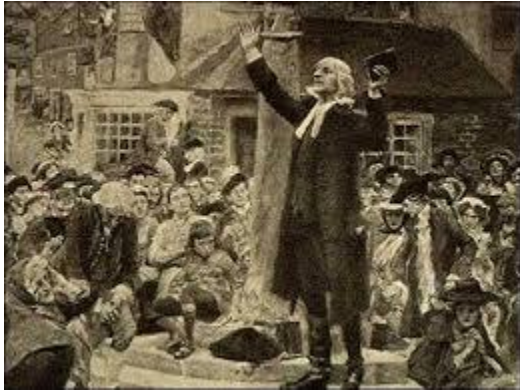
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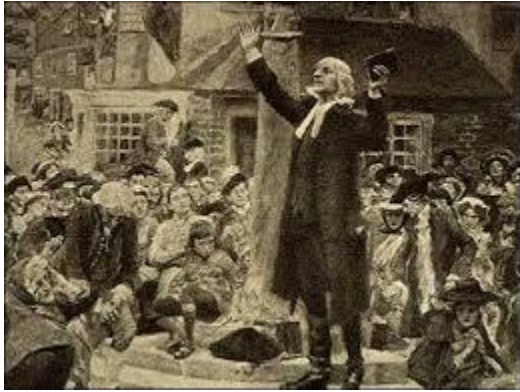
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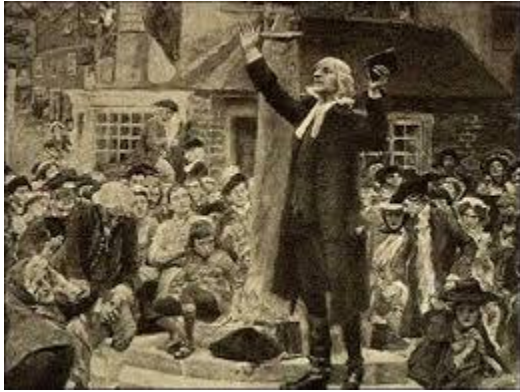




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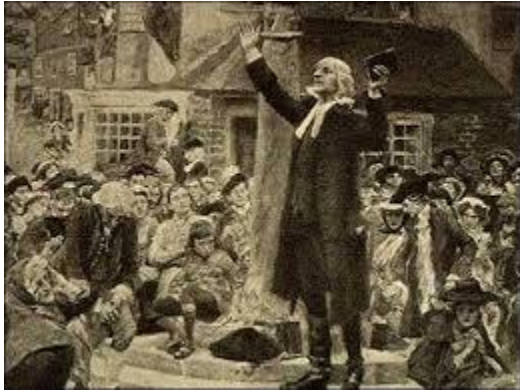




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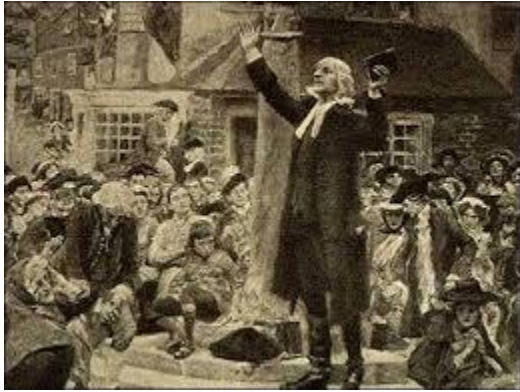




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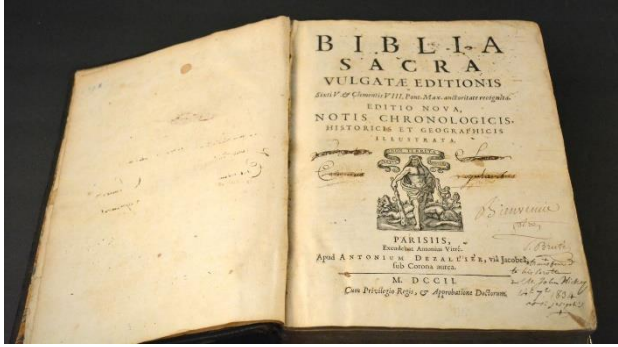




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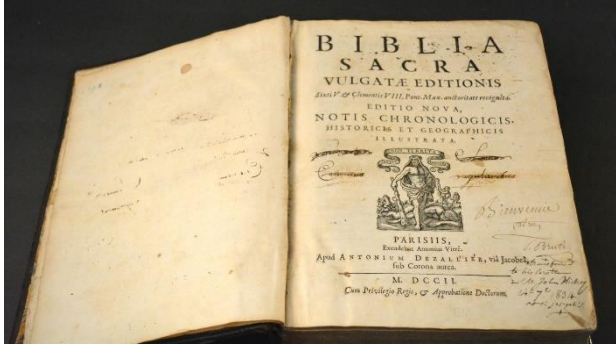




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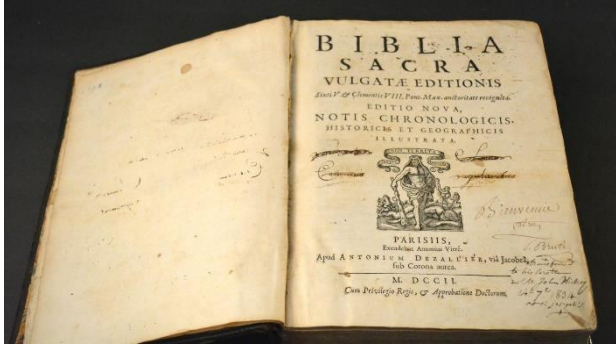




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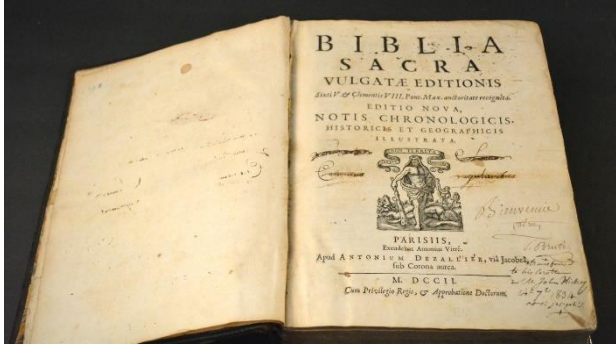




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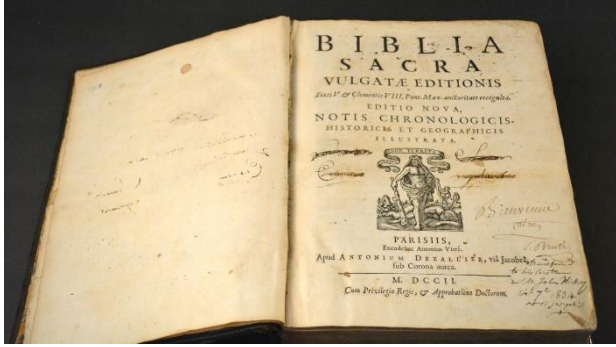




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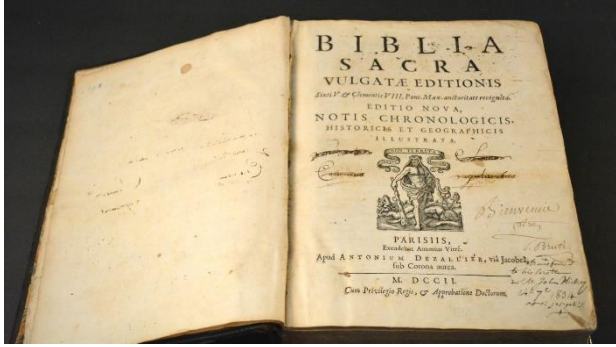




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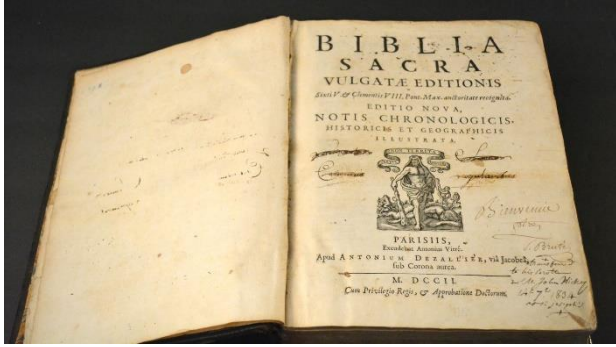




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- “Spreading Scriptural holiness across the land...”





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- Methodist congregations begin to form, and Methodists join with other groups to hold “camp-meeting” evangelistic events on the frontier.

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- 1968 – Unification with Evangelical United Brethren (with roots in German-speaking Methodism) forms The United Methodist Church



THE HISTORY OF FAIRVIEW CHURCH

Please see “The History of Fairview Church,” which is included as an educational handout in the materials for our Church Membership Class.



INTRODUCTION TO FAIRVIEW CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

METHODIST BELIEFS

With other Christians throughout the ages, we **proclaim traditional Christian beliefs** that are rooted in **Scripture** and expressed by the **Apostles' Creed** and **other early Church affirmations**. Specifically, you will find our ministry is based on the following core beliefs:

THE BIBLE

The sole basis of our belief is the Bible, God's word of grace. We believe all Scripture is uniquely God-inspired and is our sufficient and final authority on all matters of faith and practice. Proverbs 30.5-6; Matthew 4.4; II Timothy 3.16-17.

GOD AND CREATION

We believe that there is **one true God**, eternally existing in three persons: **Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God created the universe and all things in it**, manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom, holiness, and love. **God is the Author of life and the Source of all grace**, and He is working throughout history to fulfill His plan for creation. Genesis 1.1; Psalm 139.7-10; Matthew 28.19; II Corinthians 13.13.

HUMANITY AND SIN

We believe that human beings were **created in the image of God** and were designed **to love and serve Him**. By sinfully rebelling against God's will and going their own way, fellowship with God was broken and the image of God was marred in them. As a result, **human effort cannot achieve or earn a right relationship with God; God's saving grace is necessary**. Genesis 1.26; Romans 1.18-23; Romans 3.23; Ephesians 2.8-9.

PREVENIENT GRACE

Through prevenient grace, **God initiates reconciliation** with humanity and **convicts individuals of sin**, enabling a response to His outreaching love by accepting His offer of salvation by faith. I John 4.19; John 16.5-11; John 3.16; Romans 5.8.

JUSTIFYING GRACE AND JESUS CHRIST

Through justifying grace, **God forgives and regenerates all who trust in Jesus Christ**, God's incarnate Word and virgin-born Son, who perfectly reveals God the Father to us. **He lived a sinless life and died on a cross for the sins of all**, taking on Himself the punishment for sin. **He rose from the dead** and ascended to the right hand of the Father, where **He intercedes for us**. **Believers in Christ are adopted as children of God and begin to live a holy life through faith in Christ**. John 1.14; Colossians 1.15-20; Philippians 2.5-11; I Corinthians 15.3-8.

SANCTIFYING GRACE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Through sanctifying grace, the **Holy Spirit brings spiritual growth in the believer's life** and makes possible wholehearted love for God and for others. The **inward witness of God's Spirit with their spirits**, along with the gracious promises of God's Word and the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, **assures believers that they are children of God. The Holy Spirit equips believers with gifts for ministry in the Church and witness in the world.** II Thessalonians 2.13; Romans 8.15-16; Ephesians 4.11-16.

THE CHURCH

The Church is **God's community of grace**, composed of all **who trust in Jesus Christ as Son, Savior, and Lord**. As Christ's body, the church is visible in the world wherever believers, in faithful obedience and unity, hear the Word, receive the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and live as Christian disciples. The **Church exists to glorify God, to make disciples of Jesus Christ, and to offer transformational service to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit**. Matthew 16.18; Acts 2.46-47; I Corinthians 12.12-13; Ephesians 1.22-23.

LAST THINGS

Grace will ultimately triumph in the return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of all persons, the final judgment, and God's glorious victory over sin and all evil. For followers of Christ, a new heaven and a new earth, with eternal unbroken fellowship with God, is the great promise of grace! I Corinthians 15.24-28; II Thessalonians 1.5-10; Revelation 21.1-4.

SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT BAPTISM

Three Modes of Baptism are permissible:

- Sprinkling
- Pouring
- Immersion

Infants may be baptized, but only as a part of their family's covenant of faith. Infants must grow to claim faith (and their baptisms) on their own through Confirmation or through adult profession of faith.

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER (HOLY COMMUNION)

We practice an “open table” at communion, meaning that anyone who professes faith in Christ is invited to receive the elements. A person does not have to be a member of our congregation (or a part of any particular denomination) in order to participate with us in communion.

Fairview Church generally celebrates communion on the first Sunday of each month.

Please review the
**“Bylaws of Fairview Church Properties
Incorporated”**

for additional statements concerning
congregational beliefs on
specific contemporary issues.

Copies of our Bylaws are distributed as
educational handouts in the materials for our
Church Membership Class.

INTRODUCTION TO FAIRVIEW CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

METHODIST PRACTICES AND POLITY

JOHN WESLEY'S "GENERAL RULES FOR THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODIST"

There was **only one condition** required of those who desire **admission into the Methodist societies** (gatherings of small groups or "classes" into larger congregations or "societies," which were the beginnings of local Methodist churches): **a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.** But Wesley knew that wherever this desire was really fixed in a person's soul it will be shown by his or her fruit.

It was therefore expected of all who continued in the Societies that **they should show evidence of their desire of salvation:**

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Second: By **doing good**; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all people.

Third: By **attending upon all the ordinances of God**; such as:

- The **public worship** of God.
- The **ministry of the Word**, either read or expounded.
- The **Supper of the Lord**.
- Family and private prayer**.
- Searching the Scriptures**.
- Fasting or abstinence**.

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As Wesley stated:

“These were and are the General Rules of the societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know the Holy Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish persons of the error of their ways. We will bear with them for a season. But then, if they do not repent, they will have no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.”

CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

The **qualifications, privileges, and expectations of members of Fairview Church** are found in Article 3 of our Congregation Bylaws, located on pages 3-5.

In addition to taking the vows of baptism, those wishing to become members of Fairview Church are asked the following questions before being received into membership on profession of Christian faith:

Do you believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

Do you confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put your whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as your Lord?

Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures?

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same all the days of your life as a faithful member of Christ's holy church?

And for **all desiring membership**, including those transferring membership from other Christian congregations:

Will you be loyal to Christ through this congregation?

Will you be a faithful member of Fairview Church, doing all in your power to strengthen its ministries through your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness as Christ's representative in this world?

THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE OF FAIRVIEW CHURCH

In John Wesley's day, the gathering of Christians for fellowship with each other was called "Christian Conferencing," and he regarded it as a vital "means of grace" for Christian growth.

As a result, he called all of his Methodist leadership gatherings "conferences," which were held at various places and times (i.e. quarterly, annually, etc.)

CHURCH CONFERENCE

A church conference is a gathering in which **all professing members may exercise voice and vote in business matters coming before the congregation.**

ANNUAL CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING:

This is a **church conference held in October or November** of each year prior to the beginning of a new **Church Business/Ministry Year** (which runs from **January 1 to December 31**).

At this meeting, **reports are given** on the ministry of Fairview Church in the previous year, **goals are established** for the upcoming year, and **officers are also elected** for the next Church Year. A **congregational budget is also established** for the upcoming Church Year.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

*“The administrative council shall **assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare** of the church, in **conducting the church services**, and in **performing all other work of the church**. The administrative council is responsible for making preparations to observe church ordinances and shall consider applications for church membership and affiliates. The administrative council shall consider benevolence needs, disburse the benevolence fund in cooperation with the pastor, and assist the pastor in all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The administrative council shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church’s various ministries.”*

- Article 5.B.1 of the Congregational Bylaws (page 8)

The Administrative Council consists of **elected officers** of the congregation and **chairpersons of administrative committees and ministry teams**, along with **at-large members**. Fairview Church’s Administrative Council meets monthly.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

Board of Trustees – Building, Property, and Security Matters

Committee on Finance – Financial Matters

Committee on Staff-Parish Relations and Lay Leadership Nominations – Human Relations/Personnel Matters

MINISTRY TEAMS

Worship

Discipleship (Education, Age-Level Ministries, and Small Group Ministries)

Missions (Local and Global Outreach)

Evangelism (Guest Ministries and Member Assimilation)

MINISTRY IN THE METHODIST TRADITION

ELDERS are those ordained to pastoral ministry (our pastor is an ordained elder in good standing with a recognized Christian credentialing body).

DEACONS are those set apart for specialized servant ministries both within and beyond the local church (often consisting of members of the church staff that serve in particular ministry areas).

TRUSTEES are those who serve on the local church's Board of Trustees.

LAY LEADER is the lay member charged with watching over the spiritual life and ministry of the entire congregation, in partnership with the pastor, and with facilitating communication throughout the congregation.

LAY SPEAKERS are laity trained to fill the pulpit when asked to do so by the pastor.

Financial records of our congregational ministry are always available for review by anyone upon request.



An aerial photograph of a church complex. The central building is a large, light-colored structure with a prominent, tall, light-colored steeple. It is surrounded by several other smaller buildings, likely classrooms or offices. A large, paved parking lot with white markings is visible in the foreground and to the left. The entire complex is set against a backdrop of dense, lush green trees. The text "Thank You for worshiping with us Today" is overlaid in a white, cursive font across the center of the image.

*Thank You
for
worshiping with us
Today*

This presentation was approved by Claude S. Moore, EdD