

Church History:

From the Apostolic Age to the PC(USA)

Age of the Apostles: Expansion and Centralization. Pax Romana. Threat to the gods and local economies. (Generally) minor persecutions. Circus: hold on! (Perpetua & Felicity)

Legitimization: 312 - Constantine's vision/sign of the cross. Battle of Milvian Bridge. 313 - Edict of Milan. Christianity is now legal! (and the way up for ambitious toadies). 325 - Council of Nicea.

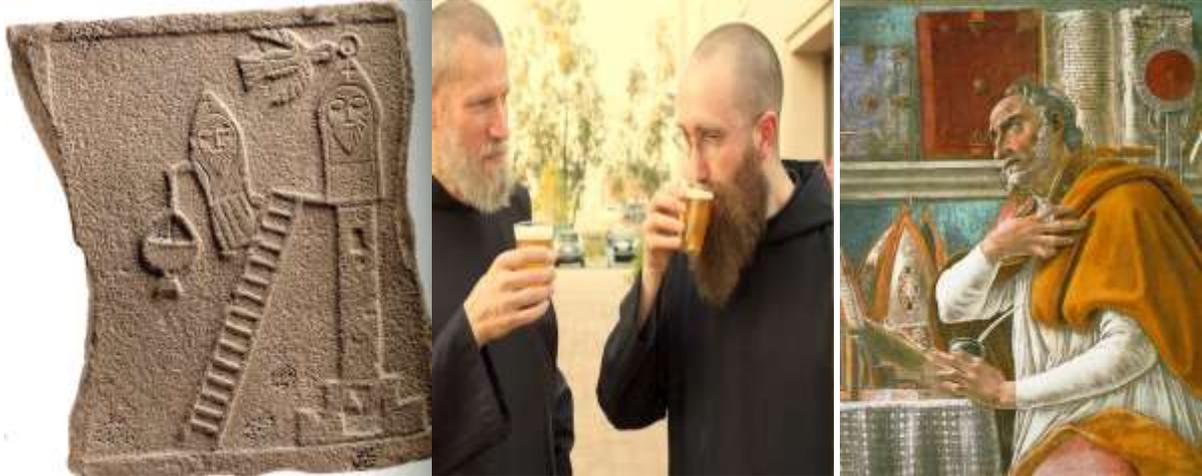
Churches gain legal authority, priests act as judges, former temples become churches.

Reaction: Life is crazy. The empire is falling apart. Rome is sacked in 410 & 455. It was better in the old days! Hermits, monks, theologians.

Saint Simeon Stylites or Symeon the Stylite (c. 388 - 2 September 459) was a Syriac ascetic saint who achieved fame for living 37 years on a small platform (3ft x 3ft) on top of a pillar (37ft) near Aleppo in Syria.

Benedict of Nursia (c. 480 - 543 or 547) founded twelve communities for monks at Subiaco, Italy (about 40 miles to the east of Rome), before moving to Monte Cassino in the mountains of southern Italy. (Exploding goblet.)

Benedict's main achievement is his "Rule of Saint Benedict", containing precepts for his monks. It is heavily influenced by previous rules but has a unique spirit of balance, moderation and reasonableness and this persuaded most religious communities founded throughout the Middle Ages to adopt it. As a result, his Rule became one of the most influential religious rules in Western Christendom. For this reason, Benedict is often called the founder of western monasticism.



Augustine of Hippo (“little Augustus”) was born in Thagaste, (the modern city of Souk Ahras in Algeria), on November 13th, 354. Father was a pagan. Mother (Monica) was a Christian and a major influence throughout his life. Died on the 28th of August in 430 in Hippo Regius (modern Annaba in Algeria), where he had been Bishop since 395.

Age 16 – his great sin.

Age ~19 – acquires a concubine whom he loves for 13 years and who bears him a son. (Perfectly respectable in his time.)

Becomes a master of rhetoric and (briefly) teaches in Rome. Influenced by but never a committed Gnostic (hidden knowledge).

Moves to Milan and falls under the influence of Bishop Ambrose.

Becomes a committed Christian, gives up his concubine (perfectly respectable for a man of his social class) and forms a small community.

Mother and son die. Moves to Africa where he is soon made Bishop of Hippo.

Pelagianism (working hard to get to heaven!)

Donatism (it’s about God!)

Middle Ages: Church grows and grows, consolidates power. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Reform! Reform! Reform! (or not)

Martin Luther (born Nov. 10, 1483, Eisleben, Saxony [Germany]—died Feb. 18, 1546, Eisleben).

Wealthy family. Wheatfield incident. Lousy Monk.

Sent to Whittenburg to study. Faith & Grace are gifts from God, not earned.

Indulgences controversy (St. Peter's Basilica).

95 Thesis.

Diet of Worms. Hides out with Frederick, Elector of Saxony. Closes the monasteries. "I eat like a German and get drunk like a Bavarian – praise be to God." Translates Bible into German.

Emphasis on humanity of Jesus (especially the little Lord Jesus in the cradle). Christ is present in communion as fire is present in an ember: in, over, around and through!

John Calvin (b. 1509, Noyon, France; d. 1564, Geneva, Switzerland). Son of a lawyer, trained for both the law and clergy, read humanism and came to similar belief as Martin Luther.

1536 – 1st edition of Institutes of the Christian Religion (role of French Fashion); moved to Geneva.

1538 - Fled to Strasbourg where he worked with protestant, French refugees.

1541 – Invited back to Geneva. Married, no children past infancy, a fun guy!

Created schools, organized churches, taught, preached, wrote commentaries, reformed worship (in native language with emphasis on preaching).

Buried where? Why?



John Knox (born c. 1514, near Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland—died November 24, 1572, Edinburgh), foremost leader of the Scottish Reformation.

Private Tutor, political intrigue.

French galley slave.

Geneva.

Returned to Scotland. Won! Book of Church Order.

Why stay in Scotland? Let's go to Ireland! // Why are we in Ireland? There's nothing to eat but potatoes. Let's go to America!

America

Presbyterian/Reformed churches begin being formed in America on the mid-Atlantic coast in the 1630s.

1706 Presbyterian ministers formed the Presbytery of Philadelphia, the first Presbytery in the new world.

American Revolution = Presbyterian Revolution.

John Witherspoon!!!! We are political.

Slow to join the Westward Expansion: educated clergy, commitment to being in relationship with one another.

Civil War – split and split and kept on splitting.

1983 – Atlanta: merged into the PC(USA).

Today: We have about 1,200,000 active members; 18,450 ordained ministers (including retired) and 8,800 congregations, engaging the communities in which they live and serve with God's love.

We are divided into 16 Synods and 172 Presbyteries. Our church is in the **Synod of Lakes & Prairies** and the **Presbytery of Winnebago**.

