

METHODIST DENOMINATIONS REFERRED TO IN THIS BOOK

African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.) An independent denomination founded by blacks in the North and border states as a protest against racial discrimination in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The A.M.E. Church held its inaugural General Conference in 1816 at Bethel Church in Philadelphia. Richard Allen was chosen to be the first bishop of the A.M.E. Church. In addition to being a Methodist minister, Allen was also one of the founders of a black mutual aid society called the Free African Society of Philadelphia. Allen also served as president of the first National Negro Convention, which took place in 1831 and was held at Bethel A.M.E. Church in Philadelphia. Allen's activism helped establish the values and objectives of the A.M.E. social gospel.

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (A.M.E. Zion) An independent denomination founded by blacks in the North in 1822 as a protest against racial discrimination in the Methodist Episcopal Church and because of dissatisfaction with the A.M.E. alternative.¹ James Varick became the first superintendent of the denomination at its inaugural conference, which took place at Zion Church in New York City. In 1848 the new denomination officially adopted the name by which it is now known; before then it was called the A.M.E. Church, just like its Philadelphia-based sister denomination.

Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America (C.M.E.) An independent denomination founded in 1870 in Jackson, Tennessee, by southern blacks with the assistance of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The founding of the

C.M.E. Church represented both an assertion of black independence from white evangelical oversight and an attempt to retain some of the traditions of antebellum paternalism. The C.M.E. Church was also a black southern alternative to African Methodism and Northern Methodism.

Methodist Episcopal Church (M.E.), or Northern Methodist John and Charles Wesley brought Methodism to North America from England in the 1730s. The first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church took place in Baltimore in 1784. Initially, the M.E. Church took strong positions in opposition to slavery. The denomination modified its antislavery policies in order to survive in the South and have access to slaves, although antislavery sentiment remained strong in the North. Because the M.E. Church was the original source of all Methodism in North America it is sometimes referred to as the “Mother Church.”

Methodist Episcopal Church, South (M.E. Church, South), or Southern Methodist In 1844, the General Conference of the M.E. Church directed Bishop James O. Andrew of Georgia to desist from the exercise of his office until he was no longer in possession of slaves. Methodists from the South protested against that action by withdrawing from the M.E. Church and forming the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Although the decision to found a separate denomination was made in 1844, the first General Conference of the M.E. Church, South, did not convene until 1846.

The most comprehensive single volume on the history of black Methodism is *Dark Salvation: The Story of Methodism as It Developed among Blacks in America* by Harry V. Richardson.