



CEC Member Churches

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ALBANIA

Population:

2 930 187
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Islam

Christianity:

26%

**Orthodox Autocephalous
Church of Albania**

Kisha Orthodhokse Autoqefale
e Shqipërisë

ORTHODOX AUTOCEPHALOUS CHURCH OF ALBANIA

Kisha Orthodhokse Autoqefale e Shqipërisë

Dioceses: 6

Monasteries: 5 (4 male, 1 female)

Parishes: more than 550

Membership: 550 000

Archbishop: 1

Metropolitans: 6

Bishop: 1

Priests: 159

Christianity in Albania goes back to the apostolic years. Albania has been directly involved in the political and intellectual ferment of three successive empires: Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman. On the basis of the ecclesiastical affiliation of the provinces of modern Albania, we can discern five chronological periods:

- 1) From Apostolic time to 731 AD, when this region was subordinate to the self-governing Church of East Illyricum, under the Roman Vicariate of Thessaloniki.
- 2) The second period extends from 731 AD to the eleventh century; the region was subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople.
- 3) The third period runs from the eleventh century to 1767; most of the Sees were subject to the Autocephalous Archbishopric of Ohrid.
- 4) The fourth period extends from 1767 to 1937; subject to the Patriarchate of Constantinople.
- 5) In the last period, from 1937 onwards, the Church of Albania continues to be autocephalous.

From the 15th to the 20th century, Albania was part of the Ottoman Empire, and many of the people converted to Islam, often under pressure. At the beginning of the 20th century a nationalist independence movement emerged, which was also led by people of Orthodox faith or descent.

ORTHODOX AUTOCEPHALOUS CHURCH OF ALBANIA

In 1937 the Orthodox Church of Albania was granted autocephaly by the Ecumenical Patriarch. During the interwar period, aside from the Archbishopric of Tirana, there were Orthodox Dioceses in Berat, Argyrokastro, and Korytsa. Greek was still widely used in the liturgy, but a process of translation of the texts into Albanian began in nineteenth century. An Orthodox Seminary was founded at Korytsa in 1930. Two years later the country was occupied by fascist Italy. Attempts were made to unite the Orthodox Church with Rome, but failed. After the Germans pulled out of Albania in late November 1944, the Communist regime imposed its complete control and religious persecution began, the Orthodox and other churches in Albania came under complete control of the state. Until 1967 it was the same type of persecution as in other communist countries. In 1967 Albania declared itself an atheist state. All forms of religious expression were constitutionally forbidden. In 1991, following the political changes in Albania, the Ecumenical Patriarch appointed then-Bishop Anastasios Yannoulatos from Greece as Patriarchal Exarch, and subsequently as archbishop of Tirana, together with three diocesan metropolitans, also from Greece. After many difficulties with the Albanian authorities who opposed an all-Greek hierarchy, the holy synod of the Church of Albania was re-established in 1998, with two of the four hierarchs being Albanian.

The church started by proclaiming the gospel of love and peace. It developed a life of worship and cultivated a Christian (Orthodox) conscience. It re-established Orthodox parishes, with active liturgical lives in many cities and towns, as well as in hundreds of villages, and created Orthodox intellectual groups, women's groups and youth groups, which assist the church with ecclesiastical work. In October 1992, the Hieratic (priestly) School began functioning on the premises of a rented hotel and later, in 1997, the Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy was opened along with boarding facilities inside a new complex of buildings owned by the Church in the area of the New Monastery of Saint Vlash in Durres, which is also open to women, who will serve as lay leaders in the church. 150 churches were built from their foundations, 63 cultural monuments were restored on the basis

ORTHODOX AUTOCEPHALOUS CHURCH OF ALBANIA

of specific scientific studies, 160 more churches were either completely rebuilt or restored, over 70 buildings were built or bought and repaired, including the building of the Theological Academy, the Monastery of St Vlash, the Archdiocesan building, the Metropolis centres in Gjirokastra, Korca, and Berat. Also kindergartens for children were built in 21 towns and villages; two Ecclesiastical High Schools in Gjirokastra and Sukth in Durres; the Annunciation Medical Diagnostic Centre in Tirana, a spiritual and cultural centre in Lushnjë, Medical Centres in Jergucat in Gjirokastra, and several schools in Tirana, Durres and Gjirokastra. In addition, the complex of the Nazareth Church Workshops was established; the Professional High School in Mesopotam, the Girls' Dormitory in Bularat, as well as two Vocational Training Institutes in Tirana and Gjirokastra, the academy, a monastery, schools, guest houses, etc., have been set up and 159 priests, all Albanians, have been trained and consecrated.

The head of the church is the Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania Anastasios.

The Orthodox Church of Albania is a member of the CEC and of the WCC (1994).

ARMENIA

Population:

2 972 900

(December 31, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

94%

Armenian Apostolic Church

Հայ Առաքելական Եկեղեցի

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Հայ Առաքելական Եկեղեցի

Under the Jurisdiction of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church are:

Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople and

Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem

Dioceses in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh: 12

Dioceses in Europe: 12

Dioceses in America, Middle East and Australia: 14

Bishops: 51

Priests: 551

Christianity was preached in Armenia by the Apostles St Thaddeus and St Bartholomew, who became the founders of the Church of Armenia. They were martyred by the order of King Sanatruk of Armenia.

Tertullian in his book “Against the Jews” (7), written in 197, speaking of the nations which had adopted Christianity, the Parthians, Lydians, Phrygians, Cappadocians, also mentions the Armenians. This testimony is also confirmed by the blessed St Augustine (+430), in his work, “Against Manichaeans”.

At the end of the 2nd and at the beginning of the 3rd centuries, Kings Vagharsh II (186-196), Chosroes (Khosrov) I (196-216) and their successors persecuted the Christians in Armenia. These persecutions were described by Firmilian, the bishop of Cappadocian Caesarea (230-268) in his book “History of the Persecutions of the Church”.

Eusebius of Caesarea mentions the letter of Dionysius, the bishop of Alexandria (ca. 251-255), “On Penitence to the Brothers Living in Armenia, whose bishop was Meruzhan” (VI, 46,2), which proves that in the middle of the 3rd century there was an organized Christian community in Armenia, acknowledged by the universal Church.

At the end of the 3rd century Christianity was spread so widely in Armenia that it became the state religion in 301.

In the 4th century in Armenia Christian services were conducted in Greek and Syriac. In order to make Christianity and the Bible available

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

for the Armenian faithful in their native language St Mesrop Mashtots undertook the invention of the Armenian alphabet in 404-406, and under the guidance of Catholicos Sahak (389-438) of Armenia a group of translators began the translation of the Bible in 406-435.

On the account of the doctrinal formulation adopted by the 4th Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451), Syria and Egypt, the Oriental provinces of the Byzantine Empire, as well as the Churches of Armenia, Ethiopia and India were separated from the Churches of Constantinople and Rome, adopting the formulation of St Cyril of Alexandria: "One is the nature of the Incarnate Son of God". Armenian Church then maintained her own way of living and development.

Hard historical and political circumstances caused the creation of other Hierarchical Sees (Catholicosates or Patriarchates) next to the Catholicosate of All Armenians in the life of the Armenian Church. The following Hierarchical Sees continue their existence until today:

The Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia (1446), the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem (7th century) and the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople (1461).

In the 20th century the Armenian Church endured great losses. Only during World War I about 4,000 clergymen were assassinated, 50 Dioceses with thousands of churches and hundreds of monasteries were abolished.

In the years of the atheistic regime the survived clergy of the Armenian Church were exiled, and the churches were either ruined or closed.

After World War I the Armenian migrants from Western Armenia (in Turkey) established their Church in Diaspora, having as priority the preservation of their mother tongue and national Christian identity.

Today the Armenian Apostolic Church has entered an era of revival. In 2001 the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church solemnly celebrated the 1700th anniversary of the Proclamation of Christianity as the state religion in Armenia, which included the blessing of the Holy Myron, the consecration of a large new Cathedral of St Gregory the Illuminator in Yerevan, youth pilgrimages, conferences and other worthwhile events.

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Inaugurated at the beginning of the 20th century, the Ecumenical Movement has continually been a central area of focus for the Armenian Church. She has always participated in deliberations and contributed her opinions regarding the question of Unity of the Churches.

During the initial formation of the Ecumenical Movement and after the establishment of the World Council of Churches, the Armenian Church led by the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, and at the direction of all the subsequent Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians has participated to this movement first as an observer and later as an active member.

In 1962 the Armenian Church joined the World Council of Churches (WCC) as a full member, under the patronage of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. At the 1977 Conference of European Churches (CEC), the Armenian Church became involved with different inter-church and ecumenical organizations.

In 2015, marked by events commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian Apostolic Church held a ceremony in Holy Etchmiadzin to canonize the victims of the Armenian Genocide. The ceremony was held on April 23, 2015 to coincide with the start of the killings, ending at the symbolic time of 19:15 with a bell ringing 100 times. Armenian churches around the world likewise rang a bell 100 times at 19:15 local time. The ceremony, which created around 1.5 million new saints, was the first canonization by the church in 400 years.

AUSTRIA

Population:

8 823 054
(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

83%

**Evangelical Church of
the Augsburg Confession
in Austria**

Evangelische Kirche A.B.
in Österreich

**Evangelical Church H.C.
in Austria**

Evangelische Kirche H.B.
in Österreich

Old-Catholic Church of Austria

Altkatholische Kirche
Österreichs

**United Methodist Church
in Austria**

Evangelisch-Methodistische
Kirche in Österreich

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN AUSTRIA

Evangelische Kirche A.B. in Österreich

Congregations: 194

Membership: 283 202

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 245

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (Lutheran) and the Evangelical Church of the Helvetic Confession (Reformed) in Austria form together an ecclesiastical entity called the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions, a designation which provides for cooperation in certain areas but leaves the two groups fully independent in matters of confessional identity and administration.

The Reformation reached the area of what is today called Austria very early. As early as January 12, 1522, Paul Speratus proclaimed Evangelical principles. By the end of the 16th century two thirds of the population were touched by Reformation.

The Counter-Reformation made the Evangelical preachers to leave the country, churches were destroyed, books and writings burned. People had to choose between emigration or return to the Catholic Church. In 1781 the Edict of Toleration was issued, and in 1861 the Protestants were granted complete freedom of confession and public practice of religion. In 1821 a theological school was authorised which in 1927 became the Evangelical Faculty in the University of Vienna.

During the “Free from Rome” movement in the late 19th and early 20th century many Catholics joined the Protestant Churches. The influx of German refugees from Central and Eastern Europe after World War II, and of Hungarians after the uprising of 1956, increased once again the membership of the Protestant Churches.

The law for Protestants voted in 1961 by the Austrian Parliament provided the legal independence of the churches and public support for the Protestant faculty of theology, for religious instruction in schools, and for military chaplaincies and church-related welfare services.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN AUSTRIA

The church promotes dialogue with various Christian communities in neighbouring nations.

The church has a Synod as the highest governing body. The highest ecclesiastical representative is the bishop. Members of the Executive Committees of the synod, as well as the bishop (for 12 years, re-election allowed) are elected by the respective synods, made up of an equal number of clergy and laity. The church operates within a Presbyterian-synodical constitution. The constitution is based on principles integrated within the confessions of both the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg (A.B.) Confession in Austria is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH H.C. IN AUSTRIA

Evangelische Kirche H.B. in Österreich

Congregations: 9

Membership: 13 000

Pastors: 11

The Evangelical Church of the Helvetic Confession (Reformed) and the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (Lutheran) in Austria form together an ecclesiastical entity called the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions, a designation which provides for cooperation in certain areas but leaves the two groups fully independent in matters of confessional identity and administration.

The Reformation reached the area of what is today called Austria very early. As soon as January 12, 1522, Paul Speratus proclaimed Evangelical principles. By the end of the 16th century two thirds of the population were touched by Reformation.

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During the “Away from Rome” (German: Los-von-Rom-Bewegung) movement in the late 19th and early 20th century (founded by the Pan-German politician Georg Ritter von Schönerer) many Catholics joined to the Protestant Churches. The influx of German refugees from Central and Eastern Europe after World War II, and of Hungarians after the uprising of 1956, increased once again the membership of the Protestant Churches.

The church promotes dialogue with various Christian communities in neighbouring nations.

The church has a Synod as the highest governing body. The highest ecclesiastical representative is the Superintendent. Members of the

EVANGELICAL CHURCH H.C. IN AUSTRIA

Executive Committees of the synod, as well as the Landessuperintendent (for 6 years; re-election is allowed) are elected by the respective synods, made up of equal number of clergy and laity. The church operates within a presbyterial-synodal constitution. The constitution is based on principles integrated within the confessions of both the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.

The Evangelical Church of the Helvetic (H.B.) Confession in Austria is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH OF AUSTRIA

Altkatholische Kirche Österreichs

Parishes: 12

Membership: 9 178

Bishop: 1

Priests: 19

The Old-Catholic Church of Austria is a member church of the Union of Utrecht of the Old-Catholic Churches. The church separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1870. The Old-Catholic Church of Austria became an established church in 1877, through the recognition by the Austrian imperial government, although the authorities did not permit the consecration of a bishop or recognize the validity of marriages performed by the Old-Catholic Church. Neither did the government allow the church tax paid by Old-Catholics to be used for the clergy, as was done in the case of all other denominations. Consequently, Old-Catholics, mostly working-class people, were constantly in financial straits. They also had difficulty in finding priests. After the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, only three parishes remained. Nine more were established later. The first bishop was consecrated by the archbishop of Utrecht and other bishops during the International Old-Catholic Congress at Bern in 1925. The church suffered much during the period 1933-45, and flourished again from the foundation of the second republic of Austria onwards.

A new canon law was established at the end of 1980, upholding the Catholic orders of bishops, priests and deacons. Since 1997 the threefold ministry (deacons, priests and bishops) is open for women too.

The Old-Catholic Church of Austria is a member of the World Council of Churches (1967), the Conference of European Churches and the International Old-Catholic Bishops' Conference.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN AUSTRIA

Evangelisch-Methodistische Kirche in Österreich

Circuits: 7

Congregations: 8

Professing members: 723

Active Clergy: 8

Methodist work in Austria was begun in Vienna in 1870 by preachers of the Wesleyan Methodist Church from southern Germany. About thirty years later, it integrated with the mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Europe. Until 1920 there were severe restrictions by the state bodies; the Methodists only had the right to a “familial practice of religion”. A mission conference formed in 1911 included congregations in Austria (Vienna, Graz and Triest), Hungary, and Vojvodina (Serbia). After the First World War, this conference was divided due to the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A time of serious unemployment and poverty followed, during which the Methodist Church was able to provide significant aid, mainly through support from abroad. In response to the religious freedom in the new Austrian state, congregations were formed in Vienna, St Poelten, Krems, and Linz. In 1933 the Parliament was dissolved by force, and the religious freedom was rescinded. Oppression under Nazi regime followed. From 1938 until the end of World War II, the Austrian congregations were part of the Southern German Conference of the Methodist Church.

In 1945 the Methodist Church in Austria was reorganized. The Methodists helped countless refugees which had come into the country. As a result, new congregations were formed in the refugee camps in Linz, Ried/Inn, Salzburg, and Bregenz. In 1951 the Methodist Church was recognized by the Austrian state. Pastors from the US, Switzerland, and Germany came to help rebuild the church. In Linz a social ministry was established.

The Church has active involvement with various social and humanitarian activities.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN AUSTRIA

The United Methodist Church in Austria belongs to the worldwide United Methodist Church which is organized as a “connectional church.” The United Methodist Church is represented in Europe in three Central Conferences, and the United Methodist Church in Austria belongs to the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe, which is represented by bishop Dr. Patrick Streiff.

The basic body in the Church is the Annual Conference. In between the Annual Conference meetings, the Kirchenvorstand (Council) acts as agent for the Annual Conference, and the Church may be represented by the superintendent or the president of the Council.

Bishop Streiff is the bishop in charge, supervising the Austrian Annual Conference, and is represented by the superintendent when absent.

The responsibility for the Church belongs to both clergy and laity alike. All positions of leadership and service are open equally to both men and women.

The Methodist Church in Austria was one of the founders of the ecumenical council in Austria, founded in 1958, and is still actively engaged in the ecumenical movement. It is a member of the World Methodist Council, the United Methodist Church and the Conference of European Churches. It maintains close correspondence with the Lutheran Church and the Reformed Church and cooperates, among others, in the areas of charities, public relations, and religion lessons in schools.

BELGIUM

Population:

11 403 187

(February 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

60,7%

**United Protestant Church
in Belgium**

Verenigde protestantse kerk
in België

Église Protestante Unie
de Belgique

Vereinigte Protestantische
Kirche in Belgien

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH IN BELGIUM

Verenigde protestantse kerk in België
Église Protestante Unie de Belgique
Vereinigte Protestantische Kirche in Belgien

Congregations: 109

Membership: 50 000

Pastors: 105

The United Protestant Church of Belgium traces its history back to the Reformation. Political forces and the Counter-Reformation did not eliminate Protestantism entirely. But it found the necessary freedom for its development only after the independence of Belgium in 1830. New churches were then added to those which had survived difficult times. This was a result of evangelization by the Reformed Churches in Switzerland, France and the Netherlands.

The congregations came together and founded the first synod in 1839. Another synod came into existence in 1849.

In 1894 two Flemish-speaking parishes were founded in Brussels and Antwerp by the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. Several other local congregations also came into existence as a result of their evangelistic work.

In 1920 the Episcopal Methodist Church of USA sent pastors to Belgium, who created new congregations.

In 1969 the Evangelical Protestant Church of Belgium united with the Belgian Conference of the United Methodist Church to form the Protestant Church of Belgium. In 1971 this church started union negotiations with the Reformed Church of Belgium, which led in 1979 to the formation of the United Protestant Church of Belgium.

The United Protestant Church of Belgium has been built on a Presbyterian Synodical pattern. The National Synod meets every year and is composed of delegates elected by the district assemblies. There, problems which concern all the congregations or problems with a national impact are discussed. The Synod elects a Council of 10 members for a four-year mandate; this Council is entrusted with maintaining and

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH IN BELGIUM

strengthening the unity and cooperation between the congregations, executing the synodical decisions and setting up development patterns of the Church.

The United Protestant Church of Belgium contributes to the social and religious life of the people in several ways.

The United Protestant Church of Belgium is a member of the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the World Methodist Council, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

BULGARIA

Pentecostal Assemblies of Bulgaria

Пятидесятническите ассамблеи
България

Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Bulgaria

Съюзът на евангелските
баптистки църкви в България

United Methodist Church in Bulgaria

Евангелска методистка
епископална църква в
България

Population:

7 050 034
(December 31, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

82%

PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF BULGARIA

Пятидесятнические ассамблеи Болгарии

Congregations: 500

Members: 25 000

The Pentecostal movement started in Bulgaria in 1920. Pastor Dionisi Zaplishni established the first Pentecostal Church in the town of Burgas.

In 1928, Dr. Nikolay Nikolov, who had lived in the United States, organized the first Pentecostal Assembly in Bulgaria and created the constitution and bylaws of this denomination. This same year, the Bulgarian Pentecostal movement was established, along with a Bible school in Gdansk, Poland.

In 1933, Pastor Emanuel Manolov printed the first Pentecostal magazine: “Good News.”

The movement has grown rapidly since the fall of communism, and it is now the largest protestant church in the country. The Pentecostal Assemblies of Bulgaria consists of 500 churches and 25,000 members.

The Sofia Pentecostal Bible College opened in 1991 and helps provide training for ministerial leadership throughout the country. The Pentecostal Assemblies of Bulgaria also supports a missionary team called “Good News.” This team is well known in Europe and Siberia.

UNION OF EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCHES IN BULGARIA

Съюзът на евангелските баптистки църкви в България

Churches: 130

Membership: 4 800

The first organized Protestant work in Bulgarian lands was that of the Congregationalists and the Methodists in the 1850s. Three major factors influenced the beginning of the Baptist work in Bulgaria: (1) the British and Foreign Bible Society sent people to distribute the Scripture in the territories under Ottoman control during the latter part of the nineteenth century; (2) Baptist refugees of German origin from Southern Russia who were fleeing religious persecution settled in northern Bulgaria; and (3) Bulgarians, who had come into contact with Baptists outside of the country and had been converted to the Baptist faith, returned to Bulgaria and preached Baptist principles. As early as 1867, Baptists began working in Bulgarian lands.

With the help of Martin Herringer as a guide and translator, Ivan Kargel, a German from St Petersburg, arrived in Kazanluck on September 5, 1880. The first Bulgarian Baptist Church in the territory of today's Bulgaria was founded by Kargel. The first protocol of the new church was dated September 7, 1880, and was signed by Kargel himself. The second congregation at Ruse (1888) led to the formation of a Romanian-Bulgarian Association in the 1890s. A congregation at the capital, Sofia, was started in 1899. Under the leadership of Peter Doycheff (1859-1913), the Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Bulgaria was formed in 1908. In particular as a result of the London Conference of 1920, the North American Baptist Conference in the US assumed sponsorship of missions in Bulgaria from 1924. For a time in the 1920s, the Danish Baptists also supported a mission to Plovdiv. Following World War II and until 1989, Baptists suffered severe persecution. In the beginning of 1990's the Sofia Baptist Church reaches a new revival. For the past twenty years, the church has grown more than tenfold.

The Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Bulgaria is a member of the Baptist World Alliance, the European Baptist Federation and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN BULGARIA

Евангелска методистка епископална църква в България

Congregations: 27

Professing members: 1 265

Active Clergy: 20

The United Methodist Church in Bulgaria looks back at a history of more than 150 years. The first Methodist missionaries came to Bulgaria from the US in the middle of the 19th century.

The United Methodist Church in Bulgaria was always and still is a minority church which often had to struggle for its survival.

Following World War II the church went on with considerable success. An Annual Conference was held in 1947. But later, when the country was under the Communist leadership, a terrible persecution of the churches started. Many pastors were beaten, thrown into prison for long periods, or even murdered. Then a law proclaiming religious freedom was passed, but in reality it made almost all church work impossible. The church was not allowed to have any contacts with the West. This was the situation for the next 40 years.

Until 1989 the United Methodist Church was not officially recognized. Only two of the original sixteen Methodist congregations had survived. In spite of this, the United Methodist Church was able to reorganize. Within the next 16 months the remaining congregations went under the leadership of the newly elected Superintendent, a first meeting of the pastors and lay delegates of the congregations took place, the United Methodist Church was officially recognized. In September 1993 the first meeting of the Annual Conference after 46 years took place. Since then, the church has been growing continuously. In many places where earlier Methodist congregations once existed, new work is being done after an interruption of many decades.

The United Methodist Church in Bulgaria is a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council, the United Methodist Church and the Conference of European Churches.

CROATIA

Baptist Union of Croatia

Savez Baptističkih Crkva
u Hrvatskoj

Church of God in Croatia

Crkva Božja u Hrvatskoj

Evangelical Church in the Republic of Croatia

Evangelička Crkva u Republici
Hrvatskoj

Evangelische Kirche in der
Republik Kroatien

Evangelical Pentecostal Church in Croatia

Evandeoska Pentekostna Crkva
u Hrvatskoj

Reformed Christian (Calvinist) Church in Croatia

Reformirana kršćanska
(kalvinska) Crkva u Hrvatskoj

Horvátországi Református
Keresztyén Kálvini Egyház

Population:

4 189 353
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

93%

BAPTIST UNION OF CROATIA

Savez Baptističkih Crkva u Hrvatskoj

Churches: 48

Membership: 2 000

The Baptist Union of Croatia is a national organization of Baptists in Croatia. The Baptist Union of Croatia is officially recognized by the state.

The first known Baptist activity in this region occurred in the late 19th century. Heinrich Meyer, the baptist apostle to Hungary, indirectly organized the work in what is now Croatia. Meyer baptized Nicola Zrincak of Zagreb, who in 1883 began a mission in Zagreb. The first Baptist Church in Croatia was founded in 1891.

Under the leadership of Vinko Vacek, the Croatian Conference was organized in 1921, followed by the Serbo-Croatian Union, organized in 1922. This second body became the Baptist Union of Croatia in 1924, which survived until World War II. During the period when Croatia was included in Yugoslavia, 1945-1991, Baptists in Croatia cooperated as part of the Baptist Union of Yugoslavia.

With the independence of Croatia in 1991, the Savez Baptistickih Crkava u Republici Hrvatskoj was reconstituted.

The Union's ministries include a theological college, an educational facility in Zagreb founded jointly by Baptists and Lutherans in 1976, as well as a Baptist Institute, started by the Baptist Union in 1999, and the Baptist Aid, "established to coordinate the work of various humanitarian organizations".

The Baptist Union of Croatia is a member of the European Baptist Federation, the Baptist World Alliance and the Conference of European Churches.

CHURCH OF GOD IN CROATIA

Crkva Božja u Hrvatskoj

Churches: 7

Members: 500

Pastors: 5

Overseer: 1

Since its beginnings, the Church of God has been a movement - a moving church with a mission of ministry to the world. In this new millennium, God is leading the Church of God as a global movement prepared to meet the demands and challenges of ministry in the 21st century.

The occurrence of the Church of God in Croatia is closely related to the occurrence and spread of the Pentecostal movement in the world. In our areas it dates back to the end of the 19th century. "The beginnings of the Pentecostal movement in our area date before the First World War."

In the area of Srijem and Slavonia at the end of the 1920s, communities of believers of Pentecostal denomination were established in different places. Between the two world wars, these communities of believers did not have an umbrella organisation until the 1950s. Back then, in the former Yugoslavia, the Church was officially recognised by the state, because during the Second World War the activities of religious communities were forbidden. Towards the end of the fifties in the religious communities of Pentecostal denomination, the organisational changes came into existence.

The Elders made a decision at the Assembly in Vinkovci, March 3, 1968, that a part of the community of believers of Pentecostal denomination would go under the name CHURCH OF GOD in the SFRY. The Church of God in its continuity of development in this area establishes a partner relationship with the Church of God in the world (Cleveland, Tennessee).

When Croatia claimed independence from Yugoslavia in January 1992, the Church of God in the Republic of Croatia reconstituted becoming territorially and organisationally independent. Since then the seat of the Church of God in Republic of Croatia is in Vinkovci, with its office in Kralja Zvonimira 66a. The Church of God is a co-founder of the High

CHURCH OF GOD IN CROATIA

Evangelical Theological University in Osijek and is actively involved in its activities. The community of believers of the Church of God is a member of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Protestant Evangelical Council (PEV) in the Republic of Croatia. Along with the Evangelical (Pentecostal) Church in Croatia, the Church of God in the Republic of Croatia as an affiliated Church, signed the Treaty with the Government of the Republic of Croatia on issues of mutual interest. The Treaty has been signed on July 4, 2003 in Zagreb.

Today, believers of the Church of God, as well as our predecessors, together with other churches of the Reformed heritage and general (universal) Church seek to promote divine truth of the Holy Scriptures. Also promoting Christian love and mutual respect toward everyone.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Evangelička Crkva u Republici Hrvatskoj Evangelische Kirche in der Republik Kroatien

Congregations: 13

Membership: 14 653

Although the Reformation came to the Croatian region in its initial phase, it was unable to take a stronger hold in Croatia due to the strong Counter-Reformation. Croatian Protestants were forced to emigrate, and Protestantism only managed to survive in the regions outside of the jurisdiction of the Croatian Viceroy and Parliament.

It was around the middle of the 19th century (in 1859) that religious tolerance was accepted and Protestant churches could be built in Croatian regions. Lutheran churches of the Augsburg confession were founded by German and Slovak immigrants. They moved to Croatian regions drawn by the economic possibilities. For the most part, the Germans came as farmers from the German region of Baden-Württemberg. Their settling came in several major migration waves, called Schwabenzug. New Lutheran assemblies in Croatia and Slavonija were founded in Zagreb (1859), Bingula Erdevik (1867), Antunovac (1867), Hrastovac (1868), Beška (1872), Osijek (1872), Surčin (1879), and Mitrovica (1892). When it came to the building of buildings and initial projects, the churches had the support of bigger churches in Austria-Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, and the society of Gustaph Adolf. The clergy was mostly educated in Germany, but theological education was moved to Hungary later on because the Lutheran churches were under the jurisdiction in Hungary, and until the very end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire they did not succeed in their plan to found an independent Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession.

By the end of World War I there were two Lutheran publications present in Croatian region, Grüss Gott and Neues Leben, coming from different publishers, mostly in Vojvodina. Not long after the declaration of the Yugoslav state (SHS), a German seniorat was established first, and then

EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

the German Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession, with its bishopric in Zagreb.

The Evangelical Church in Croatia is a member of the Lutheran World Federation (1951), the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IN CROATIA

Evangeoska Pentekostna Crkva u Hrvatskoj

Churches: 40

Membership: 2 000

Pastors: 30

The Evangelical Pentecostal Church in Croatia is a fusion of two leading Christian movements in the 20th and 21st centuries: Evangelical and Pentecostal.

As part of the worldwide Evangelical and Pentecostal family, the Evangelical Pentecostal Church in Croatia is an independent Christian community, connected with many other Christian Churches in the local area and in the world. They have sent missionaries to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The highest spiritual and ruling body of the Evangelical Pentecostal Church in Croatia is the Council. It consists of representatives from local churches, mission stations, and church institutions. The executive body of the Evangelical Pentecostal Church Council is the presbytery, consisting of regional presbyteries, a president, a vice president, and a general secretary.

REFORMED CHRISTIAN (CALVINIST) CHURCH IN CROATIA

Reformirana kršćanska (kalvinska) Crkva u Hrvatskoj Horvátországi Református Keresztyén Kálvini Egyház

Congregations: 23

Membership: 4 000

Pastors: 12

The Reformed Christian (Calvinist) Church in Croatia became an independent church following the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1991. The war, which broke Yugoslavia into various independent countries, including Croatia, had deep effects on the churches of Croatia.

The church was organized as a Reformed Church in 1551, when Croatia was united with Hungary, later on in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Counter-Reformation propaganda since the second half of the 16th century brought difficulties for Protestants in Croatian areas. The situation was legalized by Croatian Parliament in 1604, which meant total ban of religious freedom, and enforced assimilation of Protestants. But the Edict of Toleration in 1781 guaranteed limited freedom to mainstream Protestants (Lutherans and Calvinists). In 1859 the Croatian Parliament granted freedom of religion to the Reformed and Lutheran Church.

After World War I, the southern territories of Hungary were annexed to the newly created Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which changed its name in 1929 to Yugoslavia. Thus the Reformed Church in Yugoslavia came into being. When Croatia became an independent country, the 20 parishes (situated mostly in the North-East region Croatia, but scattered as far to the West as Zagreb), at the Synod held on 30 January 1993, organized the separate Reformed Christian Church in Croatia.

The organizational structure of the church is synodical. The church communities have been united in Synods inside the Synod-Presbyterian polity under coordination of the Synod Council led by a bishop who is elected.

REFORMED CHRISTIAN (CALVINIST) CHURCH IN CROATIA

The Reformed Christian (Calvinist) Church in Croatia is the largest Protestant Church in Croatia. Members are Croats, ethnic Hungarians and Czechs.

The Reformed Christian (Calvinist) Church in Croatia is a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Conference of European Churches and has relations with the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in Hungary and the United Reformed Church in Great Britain.

CYPRUS

Population:

1 179 551
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

72%

Church of Cyprus

Εκκλησία της Κύπρου

CHURCH OF CYPRUS

Εκκλησία της Κύπρου

Dioceses: 10

Parishes: 496

Membership: 850 000

Archbishop: 1

Metropolitans: 9

Bishops: 7

Priests: 692

The Church of Cyprus has apostolic roots and according to the Book of Acts (13:4-13) the island was evangelized by Paul the Apostle, accompanied by Barnabas and Mark the Evangelist (AD 45). The Apostle Barnabas is regarded as the founder and first bishop of the local church, because in 50 AD St Barnabas returned to Cyprus accompanied by St Mark and set up his base in Salamis. He is the first Archbishop of Cyprus. He was stoned to death by the Jews on the outskirts of Salamis, where he was also buried (AD 57).

Because the island was administered as part of the civil province of the East, whose capital was Antioch, the Patriarchs of Antioch for a time claimed jurisdiction over the Cypriot Church and the right to appoint its archbishop, but the Council of Ephesus in 431, and later the emperor, recognized the autocephaly of the Church of Cyprus. Politically, Cyprus became dependent on Byzantium.

From the mid-7th to the 10th century, there were frequent Arab attacks against Cyprus that often wrought widespread devastation. Cyprus was definitively liberated from the Arabs in 965, and there followed a flourishing of monasticism and Byzantine art.

This progressive course of the church was stopped when the Crusaders conquered the island in 1191. The period of French (1191-1489) and Venetian rule (1489-1570/1) that followed lasted for almost four centuries. The conquerors introduced a Latin hierarchy and took control of church affairs. The Orthodox Church suffered much under the Latin rule.

CHURCH OF CYPRUS

In 1571 the island fell to the Ottoman Turks. The Turks ended the feudal social system, banished the Latin hierarchy and recognized the Orthodox. Nevertheless, the Ottoman period was also a time of hardship. The bishops, and especially the archbishop, were the only shelter and protection for the Orthodox people. They were also held responsible by the regime for any problem, disturbance or protest, and many were exiled.

When the British established their rule over Cyprus, in 1878, the Orthodox Church and people believed that an era of justice, prosperity and modernization would begin, and that the British would allow the fulfillment of the national dream, the union (enosis) of Cyprus with motherland Greece. After a spontaneous protest in 1931, which was violently repressed, the struggle for liberation began in 1955, organized, financed and guided by the Orthodox Church. Archbishop Makarios III, following the long tradition of ethnarchy, was the political leader of the liberating organization (EOKA). He was exiled, but Cyprus became an independent state in 1960, for the first time in its long history, with Archbishop Makarios as its first president.

In April 1973 a crisis began in the Church of Cyprus when the three Metropolitans of the island declared the deposition of Archbishop Makarios because his role as president was considered incompatible with being a bishop. But in July the three Metropolitans themselves were deposed by a “major synod” made up of bishops from the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and the Church of Greece. New bishops were elected and the number of dioceses in Cyprus was later increased to 6.

Since independence, the church has developed many and diverse activities, covering all aspects of life and society in Cyprus. A new (1979) constitutional charter of the church was written to replace the old one of 1914.

Since 2006, the members of the Holy Synod have increased to become 17. Four new dioceses were erected and six more auxiliary bishops were elected. In 2015, the Church of Cyprus established in Nicosia a School of Theology dedicated to the Holy Trinity.

CHURCH OF CYPRUS

The Church of Cyprus has become host to many international Orthodox and ecumenical meetings.

The head of the Church of Cyprus is the Archbishop of All Cyprus and Nova Justiniana HB Chrysostomos II, who was elected in December 2006.

The Church of Cyprus is a member of the Conference of European Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches (1994).

CZECHIA

Population:

10 610 055
(December 31, 2017)

Main religion:

Non-Religious

Christianity:

27%

Czechoslovak Hussite Church

Církev československá husitská
Tschechoslowakische Hussitische Kirche

Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren

Českobratrská církev evangelická
Evangelische Kirche der Böhmischen Brüder

Old-Catholic Church in the Czech Republic

Starokatolická církev v České republice

Altkatholische Kirche in der Tschechischen Republik

Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovakia

Pravoslávna cirkev v českých krajinách a na Slovensku

Pravoslavná církev v českých zemích a na Slovensku

Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Czech Republic

Slezská církev evangelická augsburského vyznání

Śląski Kościół Ewangelicki Wyznania Augsburgskiego

United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic

Evangelická Církev Metodistická v České Republice

CZECHOSLOVAK HUSSITE CHURCH

Církev československá husitská Tschechoslowakische Hussitische Kirche

Dioceses: 5 in the Czech Republic and 1 in Slovakia

Bishops: 6

Membership: 99 103

Congregations: 303

Pastors: 241

The Czechoslovak Hussite is a Christian church that separated from the Roman Catholic Church after World War I in former Czechoslovakia. It traces its tradition back to the Hussite reformers and acknowledges Jan Hus (John Huss) as its predecessor.

The Hussite Church contains mixed Protestant (teaching and order), Catholic (liturgy and the seven sacraments), Eastern Orthodox and national elements. Classifying it as any single one is disputable. The church describes itself as neo-Hussite.

The forerunner of the CČSH was the Jednota (Union of the Catholic Czechoslovak Clergy), which was founded in 1890 to promote modernist reforms in the Roman Catholic Church, such as use of the vernacular in the liturgy and the adoption of voluntary rather than compulsory clerical celibacy. The radical movement that resulted in the foundation of a new Church began in the Christmas season of 1919, when for the first time many Roman Catholics celebrated the mass in Czech instead of Latin. Under the leadership of Th. Dr. Karel Farsky, who later became the new church's first patriarch, the church was officially established on January 8, in Prague during a meeting of progressive Catholic priests after the Pope had rejected all proposals for reform. There was the influence of Catholic modernism, but the strongest impulse came from the Hussite tradition. The radical wing of the modernist reform movement of Roman Catholic clergy.

The basic theological characteristics of the CHC are:

1) The Spirit of Christ (the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit). This is the highest norm.

CZECHOSLOVAK HUSSITE CHURCH

- 2) The apostolic and Reformation character of the church. Both are understood as coming from the Holy Spirit.
- 3) The presence of Christ as a liturgical principle. The living Christ makes himself present through the power of the Holy Spirit in the sacramental action of the church.
- 4) Respect for scientific truth and openness towards the world. There is only one final truth and knowledge of this final truth is only partial. Truth is a responsible relationship with God and with fellow human beings.
- 5) Freedom of conscience, which opens up horizons of pluralism of opinions and viewpoints.
- 6) Presbyterian and episcopal order. This has its origin in the universal priesthood of the people of Christ. Bishops are elected for a certain period of time. The Presbyterian order refers to the participation of elected or approved presbyters (church elders) in the structures of the church.

Through its name, the “Czechoslovak Hussite Church” proclaims its adherence to the Christian traditions of its historical territories, especially the Hussite or Czech Reformation (also known as the first Reformation). Its theology is constantly engaged in the process of critically defining its own church practice. The basic unit of the church is the local congregation, led by a council of elders which is elected by the assembly of the congregation. Together, the local congregations make up five dioceses in the Czech Republic and one in Slovakia. The dioceses are administered by diocesan councils under the leadership of a bishop, elected by the diocesan assembly. The church as a whole is administered by a central council, under the leadership of a Patriarch, who is elected by the all-church assembly. The central council consists of both priests and presbyters in equal numbers, who are elected by the diocesan assemblies. In the periods between meetings of the all-church assembly, authority is vested in the whole church vestry, with delegates (clergy and lay) from each of the dioceses.

CZECHOSLOVAK HUSSITE CHURCH

The CHC seeks to fulfil its vocation in society by bringing into dialogue contemporary moral thinking and scientific knowledge with the Spirit of Christ as preserved in the scripture and the tradition of the early church, and in the Bohemian and 16th century Reformation movements. The church takes care of the spiritual growth of all its members, at the parish level through Bible studies, religious education, preparation for the sacraments and pastoral care, at the synod and national levels through seminars, courses, summer camps, etc. Candidates for the ministry are trained at the Hussite theological faculty of Charles University in Prague, which offers also programs for other professions in the church and is open to students from other churches. A new institution of the CHC is the Huss Institute of Theological Studies where pastoral assistants, deacons and other church workers are trained. The church is actively involved in educational, social and diaconal activities and in cultural manifestations (e.g. the Hussite Music School).

The Czechoslovak Hussite Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Council of Churches, and other ecumenical boards; CHC is in ecumenical dialogue with other churches in the Czech Republic and abroad.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CZECH BRETHREN

Českokobratrská církev evangelická
Evangelische Kirche der Böhmischen Brüder

Churches: 251

Membership: 73 446

Pastors: 232

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren was officially founded in 1918 through the unification of the Protestant Churches of the Lutheran and Reformed confessions. Its history, however, begins with the 15th century religious activities of Jan Hus and his followers. In 1457 the small *Unitas Fratrum* came into existence. Although the Protestants constituted 90 percent of the population at the beginning of the 17th century, they were outlawed in their own homeland after 1620. They had either to leave the country or accept the Catholic faith. In 1781, when the Toleration Act was issued, Protestants were granted a measure of religious liberty. But still they had to belong either to the Lutheran or to the Reformed Church.

The congregations of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren have a Presbyterian order and the whole church is organized on synodical principles. The basic unit is a local parish church. The highest body is the Synod – the annual General Assembly, consists of 80 members. The highest administrative authority is the 6 member Synodical Council, consisting both of church ministers and of laity. For fulfilling its tasks the Synodical Council has a central church office, which is led by the General Secretary, who is approved by the Synod.

The life and work of the church are closely connected with the work of Evangelical Diaconal ministry. In addition to the congregational life, religious education and ecclesial schools it focuses on social care and chaplaincies in hospitals, prisons, army, detention centres and refugee camps. Ministerial Training is held at the Evangelical Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren is the largest Protestant Church in the country.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CZECH BRETHREN

It maintains good relations with many churches all around the world, including Reformed, Lutheran, United and Presbyterian Churches in Europe, USA and South Korea. It has close relations with Protestant congregations in Eastern Europe, which were founded by the Czech exiles.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Starokatolícká cirkev v Českej republike Altkatholische Kirche in der Tschechischen Republik

Parishes: 10

Membership: 3 200

Bishop: 1

Priests: 11

The Old-Catholic Church came into being in the territory of the present Czech Republic after 1870. Priest Anion Nitti and the first administrator of the Church P. Milos were important personalities of the beginnings of the Church.

The historical reason why catholic Christians were forced to establish an autonomous church organization and continues to persist, was the impossibility to accept the teachings of the First Vatican Council (1870) on supremacy of the bishop of Rome and his infallibility in matters of faith and morals, as it is in conflict with the Holy Scripture, as well as the faith and teachings of the ancient Church. The Old-Catholic Church further accepts the tradition of the Saints Cyril and Methodius, the legacy of Magister Jan Hus, Magister Jan Rokycana and the Bohemian Utraquist Church.

The short period of the Church flourishing was suppressed when political oppression of the 1970s began. The leadership of the Church was taken over by the people who collaborated with the regime and who devastated the Church spiritually, sacramentally, as well as materially. The Church, however, continued its living in informal structures. The November Revolution of 1989 resulted in summoning of the Synod of Restoration (April 29, 1990), which opened the work of Church restoration.

In accordance with the practice of the Church of the first millennium it does not impose celibacy as a condition of the ordination and makes possible for its deacons, priests and bishops to live in a marriage and have a family.

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Priests of the Old-Catholic Church in the Czech Republic are elected by their parish communities; the bishop is elected by the Synod consisting of priests and laity.

The Old-Catholic Church in the Czech Republic is a member of the Union of Utrecht of the Old-Catholic Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE CZECH LANDS AND SLOVAKIA (Church spans both Czechia and Slovakia)

Pravoslávna cirkev v českých krajinách a na Slovensku Pravoslavná církev v českých zemích a na Slovensku

Dioceses: 4

Vicar Dioceses: 2

Parishes: 172

Membership: 75 000

Archbishops: 2

Metropolitans: 2

Bishops: 2

The Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia is an autonomous church of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The present day church occupies the land of Great Moravia, where the brothers St Cyril and St Methodius began their mission to the Slavs, who came to this territory in the 9th century. After the passing away of St Methodius in 885, their mission was consistently reduced by force and eventually replaced by the Roman Catholic Church. Later on the Czech territory came under the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Orthodox priests from Austria served the Orthodox believers. In the second half of the 19th century and especially in the 20th century many believers returned to the Orthodox Church and established the Czech Orthodox diocese under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The elected leader of this movement, Fr. Matej Pavlik, was ordained a bishop in 1921 by a Serbian Orthodox bishop in Belgrade, and assumed the name Gorazd. In 1942 the bishop was executed by the fascists and the Czech Orthodox Church was outlawed.

The Orthodox Church in the territory of today's Slovakia was a part of the diocese of Mukacevo (Ukraine) until the end of 17th century. After the forced liquidation of Orthodoxy and the subsequent establishment of the Uniate (Greek-Catholic) Church, the Orthodox believers in Slovakia were ministered to by the priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church from the territory of Hungary. After the end of World War I, the diocese of Mukacevo and Presov, under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was established. In 1946 the Czechoslovak (in past) Orthodox

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE CZECH LANDS AND SLOVAKIA

placed themselves under the protection of Russian Patriarch Aleksy I and asked him to send them a bishop. All the Orthodox in the country were now united under a single hierarchy.

On December 9, 1951 the Patriarchate of Moscow granted autocephalous status to the Orthodox Church of Czechoslovakia. This was not recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate which, however, granted by its Tomos, after resolution of pending canonical questions, autocephaly in 1998 to the Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

The collapse of the government in 1989, and the subsequent division of Czechoslovakia into independent Czech and Slovak states on January 1, 1993 required modifications in the structure of this Orthodox Church. In November 1992 the Holy Synod decided to divide into two Metropolitan provinces, with two archbishoprics in each of the new republics. Due to the fact that the church exists on the territories of two independent republics it has two executive bodies – the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in the Czech Republic in Prague, and the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in the Slovak Republic in Presov. According to the constitution, the head of the church can be the archbishop of Prague or the archbishop of Presov, with the title “Metropolitan”. The highest canonical authority of the church is the Holy Synod, which consists of the four bishops from the two republics.

The church has eight monasteries (6 male, 2 female) and one secondary school. The candidates for the priesthood, teachers of religion and ethics and social workers, are trained at the Orthodox theological faculty of Presov University (Slovakia) and at its detached study centre in Olomouc (Czech Republic), at the Orthodox academy in Vilemov (Czech Republic), which is active in environmental and sustainable development programmes, and the Orthodox academy in Michalovce (Slovakia).

The Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches (1966).

SILESIA EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Slezská církev evangelická augsburského vyznání
Śląski Kościół Ewangelicki Wyznania Augsburgskiego

Seniorates: 5

Congregations: 21

Membership: 15 353

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 34

The origin of the Church goes back to the Reformation. Students studying in Wittenberg brought the tenets of Lutheranism to Silesia (then under Austrian Habsburg Monarchy). The duke of Silesia favoured the Reformation. After the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) and the Counter-Reformation, the Church continued to exist illegally in the mountains. It endured two centuries of repression.

During the 20th century the Silesian Evangelical Church passed through five stages of identity: up to 1918 it was part of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria; from 1918 to 1920 it belonged to the Lutheran Church in Poland; from 1920 to 1938 it was self-governing within the new Czechoslovakian Republic; in 1939 it came again under the Lutheran Church in Poland; from 1940 to 1945 it was part of the Evangelical Union Church in Breslau (Wrocław, in western Poland, part of Nazi Germany during that period). It finally became officially recognized in 1948 as an equal among the other churches in the CSSR.

Historically the congregations are located in Těšín Silesia (an area in south-eastern Silesia, in the north-eastern tip of the Czech Republic). In recent years the Church has begun mission activities in other parts of the country. A significant number of Church members belongs to the Polish ethnic minority. Czech and Polish are both used in the life of the Church.

The Church is divided into administrative units. The supreme body of the Church is the Synod which elects the Church Council and the bishop. The head of the Church is the bishop. The Church Council decides about the presence of particular ministers and other servants in the congregations and other Church units, represents the Church in

SILESIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

relations with other Churches and association of Churches, monitors financial management of the Church and congregations, manages the secretariat of the Church headquarters, implements the resolutions of the Synod Assembly. Two thirds of the Synod members are lay people and one third clergy.

Silesian Diaconia runs facilities providing social, psychological, pastoral and educational assistance. There is a fellowship with Lutherans in Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Germany. The Church cooperates with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (USA) and the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (USA).

The Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Conference of Protestant Churches in Europa (Leuenberg Church Fellowship), the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Evangelická Církev Metodistická v České Republice

Congregations: 23

Professing members: 833

Active Clergy: 17

The United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic came into being through the missionary ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church (USA), already after World War I. The Czech Methodist congregations in Texas sent to Czechoslovakia preachers who were prepared to preach in their old homeland. In 1920, missionaries began their work in Czechoslovakia. They organized evangelization meetings, distributed Bibles, and provided emergency services to the people, who were still suffering from the consequences of World War I. This work led to the founding of various congregations (first in what is now the Czech Republic, later in what is now Slovakia) and to the birth of the United Methodist Church in Czechoslovakia. The first Methodist Church was founded in Prague, Vršovice district, 21.II.1920.

In the early years, the church grew rapidly. Later, the young church experienced very difficult years, mostly for political reasons. Yet in spite of persecution and oppression by the state, from restriction of activities to the arrest of pastors, the church survived.

At the end of 1989, the political changes in Eastern Europe offered many new opportunities for Christian service in a highly secularized society. The United Methodist Church founded new congregations.

At present the United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic and in the Slovak Republic have one common Annual Conference. The head of The United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic is the District superintendent. His supervisor is Bishop Dr. Patrick Streif who leads the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe to which the United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic belongs.

The Diaconal Organization of the United Methodist Church is committed to social action.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The United Methodist Church in the Czech Republic is a member of a number of international and ecumenical associations, including the United Methodist Church, the World Methodist Council and the Conference of European Churches.

DENMARK

Population:

5 781 190
(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

83%

Baptist Union of Denmark

Baptistkirken i Danmark

**Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Denmark**

Folkekirken

BAPTIST UNION OF DENMARK

Baptistkirken i Danmark

Churches: 54

Membership: 5 200

Pastors: 43

The Baptist movement in Denmark began in the 19th century, a time marked both by national disasters following the Napoleonic wars, and by strong national, political and spiritual movements. Reformation in the 16th century had left Denmark with a Lutheran State Church which was the clerical counterpart of an authoritarian monarchy and which did not allow other forms of religion. Pietism later created a tradition of small groups of lay people meeting for Bible study under the supervision of the clergy. After 1830, one of these groups in Copenhagen developed traditional Baptist beliefs. In 1839 a Baptist church was formed in Copenhagen, the first Free Church congregation in the Scandinavian countries.

Until the free constitution in 1849 accorded religious liberty, the Copenhagen Baptist church and churches formed in other parts of the country had to put up with severe persecution by state and clerical authorities.

The Baptist Union of Denmark was formed in 1849, and remained a part of the German Baptist Union until 1888. In that year, influenced by the emigration of Danish Baptists to the United States and the returning influence of American Baptists on the Danes, it was reorganized.

Doctrinally, the Danish Baptists have evolved from a generally Calvinistic closed Baptist tradition to a more Arminian ecumenical body. Relations with Baptists from Germany, England, the Danish Baptists in the USA and later the American Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention, helped the Danish Baptist movement to develop into mature Baptist churches. Relations have been established with other free churches.

The denomination's Sunday School work is the oldest in the country. The Union supports a few missionaries serving the Baptist Unions of Burundi and Rwanda.

BAPTIST UNION OF DENMARK

The Baptist Union of Denmark is a Congregationalist church. The members of the church-body are all autonomous in decisions about their life and leadership locally.

There are 54 member churches. Each of them can send three voting representatives to the national conference, which holds meetings twice a year. At the conference, the representatives elect four members of the executive committee (two each year) and the president, elected for one year. The general secretary, employed by the executive committee, supports the executives and manages the secretariat.

The Baptist Union of Denmark is a member of the Baptist World Alliance, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN DENMARK

Folkekirken

Dioceses: 11

Deaneries: 111

Congregations: 2 200

Membership: 4 361 518

Bishops: 11

Pastors: 2 400

The first Danes came into contact with Christianity in southern Europe around 700 and brought it to Denmark. In 826 Ansgar, a Benedictine monk from France, became apostle to the North. In 965 King Harald Bluetooth was baptized and accepted on behalf of the country Christianity as the official religion. The 1520s brought Lutheran theology to Denmark. After winning a civil war King Christian III implemented the Reformation in 1536 and changed the church from being Roman Catholic to Lutheran. The king became head of the church and the church's property was confiscated by the government. Johannes Bugenhagen, a Lutheran reformer and theologian from Wittenberg, Germany, came to Copenhagen in 1537 to help organize the Lutheran Church of Denmark. Seven new superintendents were consecrated to replace the former bishops. In 1542 the Church Ordinance of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church was published in Danish, with information about the structure of the church and the service, the ministry, the schools and the social work. The first Danish translation of the Bible was printed in 1550.

With the constitution of 1849 the Evangelical Lutheran Church was established as the Danish people's church and as such supported by the State.

In 1992, the Queen of Denmark authorized the new Danish translation of the whole Bible, which is an ecumenical translation used by all churches in Denmark.

The minister for ecclesiastical affairs is the highest administrative authority, and the 11 bishops, each in his or her diocese, have the highest responsibility for the teaching of the church. Since 1903 parish

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN DENMARK

councils have been in charge of the affairs of the local churches and congregations. The parish council calls the pastors. The parishes are organized in deaneries, and the deaneries are organized in dioceses. In 1947 women were given the right to become pastors and bishops. The bishops are elected by the parish councils and appointed by the queen. The Council on International Relations was established in 1990 and is responsible for the ecumenical and international relations of the Lutheran church. In each diocese a committee for ecumenical work is elected.

The church is engaged in various social and humanitarian activities and through mission organizations in global mission.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Conference of European Churches, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (Leuenberg) and the Porvoo Communion.

ESTONIA

ESTONIA

**Estonian Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

Eesti Evangeelne Luterlik Kirik

Orthodox Church of Estonia

Eesti Apostlik-Oigeusu Kirik

Église orthodoxe d'Estonie

Population:

1 309 632
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Non-Religious

Christianity:

49%

ESTONIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Eesti Evangeelne Luterlik Kirik

Dioceses: 1

Deaneries: 12 (in addition 2 in diaspora)

Congregations: 168 (in addition 22 in diaspora)

Membership: 160 000 (in addition 20 000 in diaspora)

Archbishop: 1

Bishops: 2

Pastors: 215 (in addition 23 in diaspora)

The first contacts of Estonians with Christianity are more than one thousand years old, however the organized church activity began only in the 13th century when there were three episcopates - Tallinn 1229, Tartu 1224, and Haapsalu 1263.

The Lutheran Reformation was established in Estonia in 1524 bringing along with it the use of the Estonian language in the church.

Early in the Reformation era, the Estonian towns of Tallinn and Tartu, along with the chief Latvian city of Riga, formed an evangelical alliance. Gradually the Reformation spread amongst the rural people. The Counter-Reformation and the periodic wars (1558-1629) meant suffering for the young Lutheran Church, especially in southern Estonia which was ruled by Catholic Poland.

For nearly a century, until 1710, Estonia was Swedish, but after the Northern War (1700-1721) it came under Russian rule (1721-1918).

A significant date for the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC) was 31 May, 1917, when the First Estonian Church Congress took place. The Church, which had so far functioned according to the laws of Swedish and Russian Churches, became the Free People's Church in Estonia, and merged 170 congregations with 920.000 members.

The Second World War and the following 45 years of atheist propaganda and hostile attitude towards religion ruined the authority of the church and alienated it from the majority of people. In 1944, about 70,000 Estonians emigrated, many of them Lutherans, accompanied by the bishop of the church and seventy pastors. The Estonian Evangelical

ESTONIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lutheran Church in Exile was established in Sweden. In 2010, the EELC in Estonia and in exile reconfirmed their unity and since then act as one body.

The structure of parishes remained unchanged during the Soviet period, when the church was unable to go along with demographic and other developments in society. As a result the church has no congregations in many urban areas. There is one pastor for every 200–5000 people in rural areas and one for every 25,000 in towns and cities.

Among Estonians the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church is the largest church in Estonia. The head of the church is the archbishop. Its legislative body is the General Synod, and its governing body is the Consistory. The president of the Consistory is the archbishop. The members of the Consistory are the bishops, who carry out orders received from the archbishop, the chancellor, and four assessors. The General Synod elects the assessors for four years. Every assessor has a certain field of activity to lead.

The Faculty of Theology at the University of Tartu and the Institute of Theology of the EELC are the educational centres for entire church. The Institute is responsible for preparing clergy (Pastoral Seminary), other church workers, lay people, church musicians, etc., for various types of work within congregations. The faculty and institute also train teachers of religious education in public schools, as well as military, prison and hospital chaplains and people who are going to work in the mass media. The Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Porvoo Communion and the Conference of European Churches.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ESTONIA

Eesti Apostlik-Oigeusu Kirik
Église orthodoxe d'Estonie

Dioceses: 3

Parishes: 61

Convent (Skete): 1

Membership: 30 000

Metropolitan: 1

Bishops: 2

Priests: 30

The Orthodox Church of Estonia is an autonomous Orthodox Metropolia of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the borders of the Estonian Republic.

First Eastern Orthodox parishes in Estonia were established in the Middle Ages. While the Setu tribe of South-East Estonia that belonged to Pskov Princedom and after to the Muscovite State has been Orthodox since that time, the Livonian Estonia was Roman Catholic since the crusades of early 1200s and Lutheran since the 16th century. Since the incorporation of the Estonian lands into the Russian Empire in 1721, some churches were built for Russian military and merchants in the towns. A number of Estonian peasants converted to Orthodoxy in 1840s and 1880s and texts for divine services and spiritual literature translated into the local language. When Estonia gained independence in 1918, the Orthodox of three former provinces formed a united church, which was granted autonomous status by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1923. During the Independence War of 1919–1920, many Orthodox clergy and laymen, among others Bishop Platon of Tallinn, were martyred by the Bolsheviks. The Church was some 200,000 strong and was the second national church during the 1st period of Estonian independence.

The Church was brought under the Moscow Patriarchate after the World War II and Soviet occupation of Estonia. Many people also suffered for their faith during the Stalinist persecutions. Also, both government policies and the influence of atheist propaganda caused

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ESTONIA

many churches to be closed and the number of faithful declined. When Estonia got her independence again in 1991, a movement began to re-establish the autonomy. In 1996, the Ecumenical Patriarchate restored the autonomy of the Estonian Church. However, this was not recognized by the Moscow Patriarchate, which retained her own church structure in Estonia. Due to mass immigration in the Soviet period, most of the Orthodox faithful in Estonia are now of Russian descent and come under the Moscow jurisdiction.

The Orthodox Church of Estonia is headed by Metropolitan. The Church is governed by the Bishop's Synod, Church Administration and annual General Assemblies of clergy and laity.

FINLAND

Population:

5 513 849

(February 28, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

81%

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

Suomen Evankelis-Luterilainen Kirkko

Evangelisk-lutherska kyrkan i Finland

Orthodox Church of Finland

Suomen Ortodoksinen Kirkko

Ortodoxa kyrkan i Finland

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

Suomen Evankelis-Luterilainen Kirkko Evangelisk-lutherska kyrkan i Finland

Established: 1809

Congregations: 400

Dioceses: 9

Membership: 4 million

Bishops: 10

Pastors: 2 200

Finland is a country with both eastern and western influences. Christianity arrived in Finland from both East and West a thousand years ago. The western church's missionary efforts were, however, stronger, and by the beginning of the fourteenth century most of Finland was under the Roman Catholic Church and Swedish rule.

In the sixteenth century the Reformation occurred peacefully in the region. The Evangelical Lutheran Church regards itself as the natural successor of the church that existed in Finland before the Reformation. There was no radical break with the past. One of the new features the Reformation brought was the use of the vernacular in sermons and teaching, which created a standard for both written and spoken Finnish. The Reformation also brought a closer relationship between the church and the state. The Lutheran Church consolidated its position as the church of the Kingdom of Sweden.

Swedish rule ended when Russia conquered Finland at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Finland became a Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire in 1809. Although the ruler was now the Orthodox Tsar rather than a Lutheran king, the Lutheran Church remained Finland's state church. The Church Law of 1869 loosened the bonds between church and state and increased the church's independence. The General Synod, the church's supreme decision-making body, was established.

In 1917 Russia plunged into revolutionary chaos: Finland seized her opportunity on 6th December 1917, when Parliament approved the Declaration of Independence. Freedom of religion was guaranteed in

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

1923. The Freedom of Religion Act granted citizens the right to establish religious and belong to denominations freely or to remain without religious affiliation. The state no longer affirmed the Lutheran Church, thereby assuming a neutral attitude to religion. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland is not a state church, but a folk church to which the great majority (72%) belongs. However, both the Lutheran and Orthodox churches occupy a special position in Finnish legislation.

In the 1970s the church and state together appointed a committee to study the development of relations between the ecclesiastical and secular authorities. A new canon law governing the church's administration entered into force in 1994. Links between church and state have been gradually dismantled to give greater internal independence to the Lutheran Church. Local parishes thus have broad economic independence and autonomy, as does the General Synod.

The parish council is the supreme decision-making body in the parish. All parish members over the age of 16 have the right to vote in parish council elections. The supreme decision-making body for the entire church is the General Synod, which determines the church's doctrine, policy and finance. The General Synod meets twice a year. The Lutheran Church is divided into nine dioceses, each headed by a bishop; the Archbishop of Turku is the church's presiding bishop.

The church conducts theological dialogue with the other churches in Finland: the Orthodox and Catholic Churches and some Protestant Churches. The church has a wide network of international contacts. These are officially handled by the National Church Council's Department for International Relations and the Bishops' Conference, which the Archbishop chairs. The most far-reaching connections are those that have been forged with inter-church organizations, primarily the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Churches of the Porvoo Communion. Links with individual churches are strongest with those in the Nordic countries and the Estonian and Ingrian Lutheran Churches, as well as the Anglican Churches in Great Britain and Ireland, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

In 2016 the church's missionary organizations were working in 33 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Pacific region and Europe. There were over 250 missionaries, most of them working in Asia and Africa.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland is a member of the Finnish Ecumenical Council, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches and the Porvoo Communion.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF FINLAND

Suomen Ortodoksinen Kirkko Ortodoxa kyrkan i Finland

Dioceses: 3

Membership: 61 000

Archbishop: 1

Diocesan Metropolitans: 2 (in 2018, 1 vacant)

Auxiliary Bishop: 1 (in 2018, 2 retired Metropolitans)

Priests and Deacons: ca. 170

The Orthodox Church of Finland is an Eastern Orthodox Autonomous Local Church within the canonical jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Its canonical territory is the Republic of Finland. The roots of the church lie in the Christian influence and mission among the easternmost Finnish tribe of the Karelians. This Christian influence originated through contacts by adventurers and merchants with East Roman civilisation and Constantinople from the 9th century onwards. They were followed by missionary monks at the beginning of the second millennium around Lake Ladoga. The monastery of the Transfiguration on the Valamo islands in Lake Ladoga, founded according to tradition by the monk Sergius “from the South” and his Karelian disciple Herman in the 12th century, is the historical and spiritual place of origin of the Finnish Orthodox Church. In the 13th century Finland became a battleground between Catholic Sweden and Orthodox Novgorod. Eventually Sweden gained control of most of Finland and Karelia remained in the political and cultural realm of medieval Rus’.

In 1809–1917 Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire with its own constitution and government. The Orthodox parishes were administered by a consistorium which became in 1893 an archdiocese in the Russian Church. The liturgy and many Orthodox theological and spiritual works were translated into Finnish, which became the main liturgical language of the church. When Finland gained independence in 1917, the Orthodox population still lived mainly in the province of Karelia, although there were a few parishes in the

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF FINLAND

towns of Western and Southern Finland. In the new Republic of Finland, the position and the rights of the Orthodox Church were defined by a government decree in 1918. The Orthodox Church received a similar status as the predominant Lutheran Church, and is thus considered the second national church of the country. In 1923, the church had its canonical status clarified as it became an Autonomous Church within the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, with a high degree of independence. Its administration is a combination of canonical tradition and Nordic democracy. Since the 1920s the church follows the Meletian Calendar, which coincides with the Western Gregorian Calendar, including the date of Easter. A theological seminary was established in 1918. These candid decisions have proven to be very beneficial from the pastoral and missionary points of view.

The Second World War had drastic effects. Most of Finnish Karelia was annexed by the Soviet Union. 75 % of the Orthodox population became refugees in the other parts of Finland. The church lost most of its property, including the historical sites of its four monasteries. The national government granted special support to construct more than 50 church buildings and vicarages all over the country. Reconstruction of parish life, both practically and spiritually, took almost two decades. Despite dismal predictions, the Karelian tradition survived exile and gave birth to a vivid contemporary church life in all parts of Finland.

Contemporary Finnish and a modern translation of the Bible are used in the liturgy. Many liturgical, theological, devotional and educational books are published. There are several periodicals, ranging from theological to youth and children's publications to parish magazines. Many parishes and institutions are active in the social media. Translation of liturgical texts and adaptation of Byzantine and Russian melodies into Finnish continues, as well as composition of new ones. In addition to Finnish, Church Slavonic, Swedish and Skolt Sámi are traditional liturgical languages in a number of communities.

The Monastery of New Valamo has developed into a national centre for pilgrimage, for the Orthodox and others. Its spiritual and cultural mission and witness are supported by a lay academy, an art conservation

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF FINLAND

institute, library and a conference centre. The Holy Trinity Convent of Lintula is nearby. They provide all the church candles for the whole church, and are also active in publishing spiritual literature.

Ecclesial movements are a particular feature in the Finnish Orthodox tradition. From the 1880's onwards, Brotherhoods and Associations have played a crucial role in Christian education, youth work, mission and publishing. Adult education, diakonia as well as youth and children's work in the local communities are developed and coordinated by church-wide organizations. The missionary and humanitarian organization of the church "Filantropia" supports projects and programmes in Orthodox dioceses, parishes and monasteries in East Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

Theological education for future priests, lay theologians, church musicians, teachers of religion in public schools is provided by the state University of Eastern Finland, in close cooperation with the theological seminary of the church in the city of Joensuu. As a feature of the recognised position of the church, Orthodox children have the right to their own classes in religion as a part of the public school curriculum. Ethical teaching and pastoral care for Orthodox servicemen and women is organized in the military by Orthodox chaplains. Parish priests have access to the prisons and hospitals and other similar institutions on a regular basis.

With the arrival of many Orthodox immigrants in Finland since the 1980s, the church has become markedly multicultural. According to statistics, registered church members speak ca. 50 different mother tongues. Almost all parishes have become multilingual. Greek, Romanian, Amharic, Arabic and modern Russian have become languages of liturgy, instruction and pastoral care in city parishes. As a canonically recognised Autonomous Church, the Finnish church is responsible for all Orthodox Christians in its territory, and other Orthodox churches do not open their parishes there. The number of Baptized Orthodox is rising in Finland, totalling up to an estimated 100 000 persons, although not immediately reflected in the registered church membership.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF FINLAND

The primate of the church is the Archbishop of Helsinki and All Finland, in 2018 Archbishop Leo (Makkonen). The diocesan bishops are the Metropolitan of Kuopio and Karelia, and the Metropolitan of Oulu. The church consists of three dioceses and 21 parochial districts with ca. 170 churches and chapels. An administrative reform involving a change of diocesan borders and merger of districts is being launched in 2018. The central legislative organ of the church is the General Assembly which is formed of the four bishops, eleven priests, three chanters, and eighteen lay representatives. The General Assembly elects the bishops together with the Synod of Bishops. The election of the Archbishop is canonically confirmed by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The General Assembly elects also a Church Council which is responsible for the financial and legal administration of the church, with a membership including the archbishop, the diocesan metropolitans, as well as one clergy and three lay members. The prominent role of women is a typical Nordic feature in the Finnish church; in 2018, 33 % of the total membership of the General Assembly and 25% of the Church Council were women.

The Orthodox Church of Finland participates in both pan-Orthodox and ecumenical contacts in a committed way. This includes various bilateral and multilateral national and international dialogues. The church hosted the International Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue at New Valamo in 1988 and the Anglican-Orthodox International Commission in 1989. Orthodox youth take a very active role in international Orthodox and Ecumenical initiatives since the inception of Syndesmos in 1953. The Finnish church hosted the secretariat of Syndesmos in 1980-1989 and three general assemblies in 1964, 1980, and 1999.

The Orthodox Church of Finland is a member of the Finnish Ecumenical Council, the Conference of European Churches, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe and the World Council of Churches.

FRANCE

Population:

64 979 548
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

62%

Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches of France

Fédération des églises
évangéliques baptistes
de France

**Malagasy Protestant Church
in France**

Église protestante malgache
en France

**Union of Protestant Churches
in Alsace and Lorraine**

Union des églises protestantes
d'Alsace et de Lorraine

**United Protestant Church
of France**

Église protestante unie
de France

FEDERATION OF EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCHES OF FRANCE

Fédération des églises évangéliques baptistes de France

Churches: 114

Membership: 6 221

In France, the Baptist movement started in the 19th century. It was recognized as being within the Baptist Union and enjoyed the support of the American Missionary Union. The first Baptist church in France began in 1820 at Nomain. The movement spread modestly in the Nord region, the Aisne valley and the Loise valley. In 1834 work began in Brittany with the arrival in Morlaix of the Welsh pastor John Jenkins.

From 1836 Baptists became organized (opening of a pastoral school at Douai and the adoption of a common confession of faith) before being severely harassed by the Public Authorities and other churches.

The last quarter of the 19th century, however, saw an encouraging expansion which allowed the French-speaking Baptist churches (about 30 communities spread through France, Belgium and Switzerland) to organize themselves more efficiently.

In 1910, together with the French-Belgian association, the Federation of Evangelical-Baptist Churches of the North was founded, which then united with the French Protestant Federation in 1916. In 1922 the Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches of France was formed.

In 1937 the Federation created the Interior Baptist Mission aimed at planting new churches in places where they did not exist. Hence, the number of churches noticeably increased through the formation of new and the unification of free churches. After the Federation of European Baptists was formed (1949), the relations with the world Baptists began to be strengthened.

Today the Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches of France unites more than 100 churches and social institutions. It works jointly with the Baptist Union of the USA, Sweden and Great Britain. The Federation is in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.

MALAGASY PROTESTANT CHURCH IN FRANCE

Église protestante malgache en France

Congregations: 39

Membership: 10 000

Clergy: 19

The Malagasy Protestant Church was set up in 1959 by Malagasy students in France with the agreement of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Madagascar. Its membership is composed of Malagasies belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar and the Lutheran Church in Madagascar.

The Malagasy Protestant Church in France is a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Conference of European Churches and other ecumenical associations.

UNION OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN ALSACE AND LORRAINE

Union des églises protestantes d'Alsace et de Lorraine

Congregations: 247

Membership: 250 000

Priests: 250

The Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace and Lorraine (UEPAL) was created in 2006 by bringing together the Protestant Church of Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (EPCAAL) and the Protestant Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine (EPRAL). While the new body is not a united church, it provides a common decision making structure and a single body of pastors.

It has the responsibility for organizing joint activities and strengthening relations between the two constitutive churches in Alsace and the department of Moselle in Lorraine. About 80% of members belong to EPCAAL, with the remaining 20% belonging to EPRAL. The two churches keep their own structures and retain separate membership in international organizations.

Very early, the region of Alsace-Moselle (Alsace-Lorraine) embraced the ideas of the Reformation. Already in 1521 the theses of Luther were defended in the Cathedral Church of Strasbourg, the capital city of Alsace, which became an important centre of the Reformation movement. The first Reformed congregation in Strasbourg was founded by John Calvin.

In 1905 the region was under German rule and hence was not concerned by the separation of church and state. In other words, Alsace-Moselle was not affected by the two major turning points in the history of French Protestantism.

By virtue of their geographical situation, the Protestant Churches of Alsace and Moselle play a bridging role between the Protestant minorities of southern Europe and the Protestant majority churches in the North of the continent.

UNION OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN ALSACE AND LORRAINE

The Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace and Lorraine normally holds two assemblies each year, in June and in November. The term of office of the President is three years.

The Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace and Lorraine is a member of the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH OF FRANCE

Église protestante unie de France

Congregations: 450

Membership: 400 000

Pastors: 500

The creation of the United Protestant Church of France was completed when the Reformed Church of France and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France celebrated their merger at a joint national synod meeting from 8 to 12 May 2013 in Lyon, France. The synod adopted revised texts for the constitution and rules of the new church. The revisions reflect input from parishes gathered in 2011. Public education and a communication campaign have accompanied the merger process.

The roots of the church go back to the time of Reformation in the 16th century. In France, Protestants have always been a small minority. However after a long period of persecution, they gradually took their place in French society from the Revolution onwards, thanks to the progress of the secular state, which guaranteed freedom of religion for all.

The United Protestant Church of France is the main and largest Protestant Church in France.

It is a member of the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

GEORGIA

Population:

3 912 061
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

80%

Evangelical Baptist Church
of Georgia

EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH OF GEORGIA

Churches: 39

Membership: 1 015

The Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia was founded in the second part of the 19th century. In 1863, the German artisan from Lithuania, Martin Kalweit (1833-1918), settled in the capital city of Tbilisi and organized a church at his home, which was attended by other Germans. A Russian Molocan Nikita Vernon was baptized on August 20, 1865 by Kalweit. This was a historic date, as it marked the beginning of the Baptist movement not only in Georgia, but in the whole Russian Empire. Due to the active evangelism of Kalweit and Vernon the Tbilisi congregation both German and Russian grew.

The first ethnic Georgian family joined the church in 1912. The Georgian language services commenced only in 1918, when Georgia became independent.

In 1925 the first Georgian liturgical collection of hymns was published by Ilia Kandelaki. He had a vision to translate the Bible into contemporary Georgian, but was assassinated by the Bolsheviks in 1927. The task of translating the Scripture was later implemented by a Baptist lady Ekaterina Kutateladze.

The death of Ilia Kandelaki marked the beginning of persecutions of the Evangelical Churches. Most of the male members of the Baptist Church were exiled to Siberia. The Tbilisi church was closed down in 1937. In 1944 the church was reopened and a year later united with another Evangelical denomination called Evangelical Christians. In 1953 the state initiated another way of persecution by arresting the members of the church. After Stalin's death these people were released from prison.

In the early 1980s a Baptist-Orthodox Theological Commission was formed. Unprecedented relations developed with the Baptist minister regularly preaching in the Sioni Orthodox Cathedral in Tbilisi and the Baptist choir singing during the Divine Liturgy. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgian Baptists formed the independent Union and became a part of the European Baptist Federation in 1990 and the Baptist World Alliance in 1991.

EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH OF GEORGIA

In 1998 a study group of Christian Churches was set up at the initiative of Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili (EBC Georgia), Bishop Gert Hummel (Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Georgia), Bishop Juizeppe Pasotto (Catholic Church in Georgia), and Archbishop Gevork Siraidarian (Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia).

GERMANY

Catholic Diocese of the Old-Catholics in Germany

Katholisches Bistum der Alt-Katholiken in Deutschland

Evangelical Church in Germany

Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland

Union of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany (Baptist Union)

Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland (Baptisten)

United Methodist Church in Germany

Evangelisch-Methodistische Kirche in Deutschland

Population:

82 665 600
(June 30, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

64%

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF THE OLD-CATHOLICS IN GERMANY

Katholisches Bistum der Alt-Katholiken in Deutschland

Dioceses: 1

Parishes: 55

Membership: 15 500

Bishop: 1

Priests: 100

The Catholic Diocese of Old-Catholics in Germany is an independent church recognized by statute, and is a member of the Union of Utrecht of Old-Catholic Churches from 1898.

The Old-Catholic Church in Germany remains firmly in the tradition of the independent catholic churches. Its first bishop, Josef-Hubert Reinkens, was ordained on 11 August 1873 as bishop by Hermann Heykamp, Bishop of Deventer from the Dutch Old-Catholic Church. In that same year, he was recognized as bishop by the governments of Prussia, Baden and Hesse, with the same rank and privileges of any other Catholic bishop.

The name “Old” Catholic thus came from the belief that Old-Catholics were remaining with the “old” original teachings of the undivided catholic and apostolic church – as a way of denying the “new dogmas”, which were believed to be a break with the continuity of tradition and could not be regarded as truly catholic in any sense.

Catholics – both lay and clergy – who could not accept the new dogmas of the First Vatican Council (1870), were excommunicated (that is, barred from the sacraments of the church) and were thus compelled to form an independent catholic church under the leadership of their first bishop, Josef Reinkens.

The Old-Catholics are among the pioneers of the ecumenical movement. A first Old-Catholic Congress was held in Munich in 1871, attended by members of Anglican, Orthodox and Lutheran churches. In 1874-75 two conferences were held in Bonn invited by the standing committee of the synod, to promote Christian unity.

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF THE OLD-CATHOLICS IN GERMANY

Since 1931 the OCCG has practised full communion with the Anglican churches (Bonn Agreement), and more recently with the Philippine Independent Church, the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church and the Lusitanian Church of Portugal. Dialogue with the Orthodox churches continues. An agreement on Eucharistic hospitality was signed with the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) in 1985. In May 2009, the International Roman Catholic – Old Catholic Dialogue Commission published the final report on its several years of consultation aiming at communion between the Roman Catholic and the Old Catholic Church. The new document, titled “Kirche und Gemeinschaft” (Church and Communion), is more than a consensus paper and marks significant progress.

Priests are trained at the Old-Catholic seminary of the University of Bonn and at the diocesan seminary “Johanneum”. Since 1994 all the ordained ministries are open to women. The first women priests were consecrated in 1996.

The OCCG is Episcopal-Synodical: not only is the bishop elected as in the early days, by representatives of all the parishes; today parishes along with the whole diocese are structured synodically. At the parish level, the parish assembly is the highest decision-making body – it elects the parish priest and diocesan representatives. At the diocesan level, the Synod – which is made up roughly of 2/3 lay representatives from the parishes – has the right to elect the bishop.

The OCCG is a member of the World Council of Churches (1948), the Conference of European Churches and the International Old-Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN GERMANY

Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland

Congregations: 14 055 (survey 2016)

Membership: 21 922 187 (survey 2016)

Pastors: 21 509 (survey 2009)

(Source: Evangelical Church in Germany)

The Evangelical Church in Germany is a federation of 20 largely independent Lutheran, Reformed and United Regional Churches in the Federal Republic of Germany. Most of the national churches also belong to one of the two member-church associations: the Union of Protestant Churches in the EKD (UEK) or the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD).

Until 1918 the present EKD member churches were closely related to the civil authorities. In 1922 the German Protestant Church Alliance was established. Following the seizure of power by the National Socialists in 1933, it became the German Protestant Church.

In 1948 at Eisenach, the 13 Lutheran Churches, 2 Reformed Churches and 12 United Churches came together to form the EKD. Once the Berlin Wall had been built in 1961, it was almost impossible for the EKD to continue to practice organizational unity. The members of the EKD Council and Synod from Western and Eastern Germany were no longer able to meet for joint sessions. They had to convene in separate places, communication only being possible via messengers.

In June 1969 the “Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR” (BEK) came into being. This meant the eight churches in the German Democratic Republic were no more part of the EKD.

From then on there were two separate German Church Federations which were independent of each other in organizational terms, but nevertheless declared their allegiance to the “special fellowship of the whole of Protestant Christianity in Germany” as it was put in the statutes of both Federations.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN GERMANY

The dramatic changes in the GDR in autumn of 1989 and finally the reunification of the country in 1990 gave Protestants the opportunity to regain organizational unity.

The new EKD Synod could constitute itself in Coburg in June 1991 as the representative body of all 20 regional churches.

German Protestant Church structures are based on federal principles at all levels.

The Evangelical Church in Germany has the following governing bodies: the Synod, the Council, and the Church Conference. They are responsible for fulfilling the tasks as laid down in the Constitution of the EKD. The Synod is elected for a period of 6 years and is presided over by a seven-member governing board, the Presidium. As a rule, it meets once a year and has 120 members. Its job is to discuss issues concerning the EKD and pass resolutions on them. The term of office of the Council is 6 years. It has fifteen members, both lay people and clergy. The Church Conference is formed of representatives of the governing boards of the member churches. The role of the Church Conference is to discuss the EKD and its member churches' work. It can submit proposals to the Council and/or the Synod.

Through its ministry abroad, the Evangelical Church in Germany organizes worship services and provides pastoral care to German-speaking Christians in European countries outside Germany as well as overseas.

The Evangelical Church in Germany is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNION OF EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCHES IN GERMANY (BAPTIST UNION)

Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland (Baptisten)

Basic facts

The Union of Evangelical Free Churches was founded in 1942 as an affiliation between the German Baptist Union and a coalition of churches of the Brethren movement. After World War II the Union was divided as a result of the division of Germany and the construction of the Berlin Wall. After the German reunification the Union was reunited in 1991. Today, the Union of Evangelical Free Churches consists of about 680 Baptist and 130 Brethren congregations with 82,000 members.

“Back to the roots...”

The hour of birth of the Baptist movement in Germany was April 23rd 1834, when Johann Gerhard Oncken founded the first German Baptist church in Hamburg. The strife to evangelize is a constituent characteristic of German Baptists from the beginning. One of Oncken's famous statements underlines this: “Every Baptist a missionary!” At the same time another characteristic is the effort for religious freedom. Already the first church had to resist state repression. But Baptists do take a stand for religious freedom. Julius Köbner, another founding father of German Baptists, in 1848 phrased it this way: “We claim it [religious freedom] to absolutely the same extent for everybody, no matter if the person is a Christian, a Jew, a Mohammedan or whatever else.”

Organizational structure

The Union of Evangelical Free Churches is an affiliation of congregations. Together they are able to accomplish things, that one congregation could never accomplish alone. Within the Union there are 13 regional associations in which local activities are organized. The local congregations send delegates to their respective yearly regional councils and to the yearly national council. Usually about 1,000 people attend

UNION OF EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCHES IN GERMANY (BAPTIST UNION)

the meeting of this highest decision-making assembly of the Union of Evangelical Free Churches. The council elects the presidium, a governing board of 13 unpaid members, who meet five times every year and take important strategic decisions.

An executive board of six full-time members is in charge of daily business, led by the General Secretary, with the Chief Financial Officer and the heads of four departments.

Most of the Union's 50+ staff members work in Elstal near Berlin.

The Headquarters in Elstal

The campus in Elstal is not only the Union's general administrative base. It is also a place where future pastors, ordained ministers and church members are trained. The Theological Seminary Elstal is a state-accredited college, where young people can get their bachelor's and master's degrees, a prerequisite to become an ordained pastor or deacon in one of the Union's congregations. Several educational institutes on the campus conduct courses to equip people. For example, church treasurers, Sunday School teachers and youth leaders, sound technicians, facility managers, counsellors or piano players. The courses are held in Elstal as well as in other parts of Germany.

International

Arab, English, Chinese, Russian, Tamil, Vietnamese or Farsi: More than 200 international churches or groups in Germany belong to the Union of Evangelical Free Churches or are affiliated with it through German congregations. The Union's division "International Mission in Germany" (IMD) as part of the Missions Department works to strengthen these international groups and to integrate them into the Union. IMD establishes connections with the German churches and between the groups themselves, so that they can learn from each other as expatriates in Germany.

The Union of Evangelical Free Churches is one of 26 Baptist unions that carry out the work of the European Baptist Mission (EBM International). The goal of their mutual mission is to help people in their spiritual and

UNION OF EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCHES IN GERMANY (BAPTIST UNION)

material needs worldwide. EBM International realizes projects in Africa, Latin America, India and Turkey. EBM India for instance operates several schools in order to give children who due to their poor circumstances are without hope, a future. The headquarters of EBM International is located in Elstal on the campus of the Union of Evangelical Free Churches.

The Union of Evangelical Free Churches is a member of the European Baptist Federation (EBF) and of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). 51 unions with more than 800,000 Baptists belong to the EBF. In 120 countries the BWA has 223 member unions with 177,000 congregations and more than 40 million members.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN GERMANY

Evangelisch-Methodistische Kirche in Deutschland

Circuits: 240

Congregations: 480

Membership: 60 000

Pastors: 320

The United Methodist Church in Germany has various sources. Methodism here was started by Christoph Gottlieb Mueller, a German who had fled to England during the Napoleonic wars and was converted to Methodism there. He returned to Germany in 1830 and began to preach in Wuerttemberg and the Southern part of the country.

In 1849 American Methodists sent Louis S. Jacoby, a German immigrant, who had become a minister in Illinois, to Germany. He began his work in Bremen and was soon joined by others from America. In the same year Methodism began to spread in Eastern Germany. The work established by Jacoby and his associates became the German Mission Conference in 1856.

Methodism carried the work into Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and the former Baltic States. The groups formed by Mueller and the Methodist Episcopal Church united in 1897. In 1905 the United Brethren joined the Methodist Church.

Due to the division of Germany a Central Conference in East Germany (then German Democratic Republic) was formed in 1970. It set up its own institutions for theological training, publishing, social and diaconal work. The common membership in the United Methodist Church provided the framework to retain the unity in spirit and to establish partnership, yet to serve under different political and societal conditions. German reunification in 1990 made possible the unification of the Central Conferences in October, 1992. In the Federal Republic of Germany there are three annual conferences (North, East and South).

The church is engaged in a multitude of diaconal and social activities. It has an education department. It is also engaged in ecumenical work and has close contact to many other churches in Germany.

GREECE

Population:

10 768 193
(January 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

98%

Church of Greece

Εκκλησία της Ελλάδος

Evangelical Church of Greece

Ελληνική Ευαγγελική Εκκλησία

CHURCH OF GREECE

Εκκλησία της Ελλάδος

Archdiocese: 1 (with 21 subdioceses)

Metropolises: 81

Monasteries: 526 (232 male, 294 female)

Parish churches: 8 003

Chapels: 24 726

Membership: 10 003 402

Bishops: 101

Priests: 8 875

The Church of Greece is one of the autocephalous churches which make up the communion of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Christianity was first brought to the geographical area corresponding to modern Greece by the Apostle Paul, although the church's apostolicity also rests upon St Andrew who preached the gospel in Greece and suffered martyrdom in Patras (c. 66 AD), Titus, Paul's companion who preached the gospel in Crete where he became bishop, Philip who, according to the tradition, visited and preached in Athens, Luke the Evangelist who was martyred in Thebes, and John the Theologian who was exiled on the island of Patmos where he received the Revelation recorded in the last book of the New Testament. Thus Greece became the first European area to accept the gospel of Christ.

Upon formation of the Patriarchate, the Church was formerly a part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Under Ottoman rule, the Muslims had no control over the church. With the establishment of the Greek kingdom, however, the government decided to take control of the church, breaking away from the patriarch in Constantinople. The government declared the church to be autocephalous in 1833. The autocephalous status of the Greek Church was recognized in 1850 by Constantinople in a Patriarchal Tomos, which also specified that the Archbishop of Athens should be the permanent head of the synod of bishops.

CHURCH OF GREECE

The Church of Greece was originally entrusted to a synod, consisting of five members. In 1928 the Ecumenical Patriarchate issued a tome by which it ceded to the Church of Greece on a temporary basis 35 of its metropolitan dioceses in northern Greece. These, while still belonging to the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, were placed under the administration of the Church of Greece.

The church is organized into 82 dioceses. 36 of these, located in northern Greece and in the major islands in the north and northeast Aegean, are nominally and spiritually under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The dioceses of Crete (Church of Crete) and the Dodecanese, and the Monastic Republic of Holy Mount Athos remain under the direct jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople; they are not part of the Church of Greece.

Today the archbishop of Athens and All Greece presides over both a standing synod of twelve metropolitans (six from the new territories and six from southern Greece, who participate in the synod in rotation and on an annual basis), and a synod of the hierarchy (in which all ruling metropolitans participate), which meets once a year. There are two theological faculties, at the Universities of Athens and Thessaloniki. Priests are also educated at several theological Academies schools and colleges.

The Church of Greece is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF GREECE

Ελληνική Ευαγγελική Εκκλησία

Congregations: 31

Membership: 5 000

Pastors: 17

Evangelical mission work started in Greece in 1858 with the publication of the magazine *Αστήρ της Ανατολής* /Astir tis Anatolis (the Star of the East) by Michail Kalapothakis, a Greek physician and theologian. Soon, Greek Evangelical groups were formed in the main cities. The first Greek Evangelical Church was built in 1871 in the centre of Athens, which was demolished and rebuilt in 1956 due to the increasing number of followers. Another evangelical movement among Greeks begun in Asia Minor (Turkey) by the American Board of Foreign Mission. It was carried on by Greek pastors and missionaries. The first Greek Evangelical community in Asia Minor was founded in 1867.

In 1922, with the catastrophe of the Greek populations in Turkey and their expulsion to Greece, a united body of the Greek Evangelical Churches was created, which continues its work to this day. In 1924 the congregations formed a Synod.

The General Assembly of the church meets every two years, while local assemblies, consisting of pastors and elders, meet once a year. Participation of lay people in church activities and administration is high. There are churches outside Greece, in Germany and the USA, belonging to the Greek Evangelical Church.

The Greek Evangelical Church, though small, is the largest Protestant Church in Greece.

The Greek Evangelical Church is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

HUNGARY

Population:

9 771 000
(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

87%

Baptist Union of Hungary

Magyarországi Baptista Egyház

**Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Hungary**

Magyarországi Evangélikus
Egyház

Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche
in Ungarn

Reformed Church in Hungary

Magyarországi Református
Egyház

**United Methodist Church
in Hungary**

Magyarországi Metodista
Egyház

BAPTIST UNION OF HUNGARY

Magyarországi Baptista Egyház

Churches: 322

Membership: 11 865

The first Baptist missionary came to Hungary from Hamburg in 1846. Some young Hungarians who had baptized in Hamburg initiated Baptist missionary work in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The restoration of the sovereignty of Hungary in 1867 meant religious freedom for the Baptists. A new start was made in 1873 when Joseph Nowotny, a missionary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, came to the country and established the first Baptist Church in Budapest. He was persecuted, several times beaten and imprisoned, but remained a faithful evangelist. In 1874 a German-speaking church, and in 1875 a Hungarian-speaking church were opened. When the first Baptist preachers returned to the country after having studied in Hamburg, the emphasis shifted from German-speaking congregations to Hungarian-speaking communities. This resulted in bringing together the Austro-Hungarian Baptist Churches into the Hungarian Baptist Association.

The Hungarian government recognized the Baptists in 1905. The Baptist Theological Seminary was established in 1906. However, during World War II the seminary and many church buildings were destroyed. After the war, the Baptist Union, like other churches, agreed with the government to find its own place in a socialist society.

The church keenly participates in ecumenical endeavours in Hungary and in Christian missionary work within and outside Hungary. It maintains relations with Hungarian-speaking Baptist Churches elsewhere, mostly in Transylvania (Romania), Slovakia, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia, United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil and Australia.

The Baptist Union of Hungary is a member of the European Baptist Federation, the Baptist World Alliance, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN HUNGARY

Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Ungarn

Dioceses (Districts): 3

Congregations: 320

Membership: 215 000

Bishops: 3

Pastors: 360

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary is the second largest among the Protestant Churches of the country. The Lutheran Reformation began to spread to today's Hungary in 1518. The common work of the Hungarian followers of Luther and Calvin lasted until 1591. Later on the Lutheran and Calvinist (Reformed) Churches developed separately. Hungarian Protestantism had to face the Counter-Reformation. This entailed the loss of huge Lutheran congregations, as well as church buildings and schools.

The preaching activity of one of the first Hungarian reformers, Matyas Devai Biro, known as the "Hungarian Luther", extended to all of the three parts of the country - the domains of King Ferdinand of the House Hapsburg in the West, King John Szapolyai in the East and the Turkish occupation in the South. Because both kings persecuted the followers of Reformation, who had to flee from one territory to the other.

The Hungarian Protestants secured the achievements of the Reformation through successive wars of independence. The Edict of Toleration issued in 1781 granted religious freedom and the Protestant Churches were fully recognized after the restoration of the sovereignty of Hungary in 1867. The second half of the 19th century saw mass emigration of Hungarians because of dire poverty, which affected the Lutheran Church. After World War I Hungary lost many territories to the surrounding countries, which again touched the Lutheran Church in particular because about 50 percent of the Lutherans were living in these areas. Under the communist regime after World War II all the churches, including the Lutheran Church, suffered severe oppression.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN HUNGARY

There are two church districts: the Northern District and the Southern District.

The 16 Councils of Officers are chaired by senior clergymen and lay superintendents. Every parish of the Evangelical Lutheran Church has its own governing council, and the entire Church is governed by a Synod, the moderators of which are the general inspector, a lay person, and the presiding bishop. The Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary was drawn up by the Synod in 1891-1894.

Since 1986 women-pastors can also carry responsibility for pastoral offices in the congregations.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

REFORMED CHURCH IN HUNGARY

Magyarországi Református Egyház

Districts: 4

Presbyteries: 27

Congregations: 1 249

Membership: 600 000

Bishops: 4

Pastors: 1 550

In the 16th century, parallel to the European Reformation, the Swiss Reformation, Calvin's teachings, in particular, spread rapidly throughout the Carpathian Basin. The existence of the Hungarian Reformed Church is dated from the Synod of Debrecen in 1567, when the Heidelberg Catechism and the Second Helvetic Confession were adopted.

Nevertheless, in legal terms the Hungarian Reformed Community could not give shape to its unity before 1881, the date of the first General Synod. As a result of the Treaty of Trianon, following the First World War, a significant part of the RCH's members found themselves outside Hungary's new borders. Globally, there are approximately 2.5 million of Hungarian Reformed people registered.

Of these, approximately 1.5 live in Hungary, and nearly a million in various neighbouring countries. The Hungarian Reformed community in the Carpathian Basin had the chance to give public witness to the fact that: "Christ is the future, we'll join hands and follow Him," by signing the Constitution of the Hungarian Reformed Church on 22 May 2009.

The Reformation – through the translation of the Bible and Genevan psalms into Hungarian, the introduction of the printing press in the 1530s and the expanding school network – had a lasting impression not only on Hungarian literature and language, but also on the development of Hungarian thinking in general. For centuries, the famous colleges (in Debrecen, Sárospatak, Pápa, Kecskemét, Nagyvárad, Nagyenyed, Kolozsvár and Marosvásárhely) were fortresses of Hungarian Reformed culture and education, cultivating the talents of numerous would-be poets, scientists and politicians.

REFORMED CHURCH IN HUNGARY

Today, the RCH is comprised of 1,249 congregations in 27 presbyteries. The presbyteries form four church districts: Danubian, Transdanubian, Cistibiscan, Transtibisca. The main legislative and executive body of the RCH is the Synod, which is elected every six years and consists of 100 members. Presently, the RCH operates a hospital, 257 diaconal services, 129 educational institutions and 11 conference centres. The training of Reformed ministers takes place in four institutions (Debrecen, Budapest, Sárospatak, Pápa).

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN HUNGARY

Magyarországi Metodista Egyház

Congregations: 28

Professing members: 449

Active Clergy: 13

The first Methodist missionaries came to Hungary from Germany and Austria in 1898. They were able to gain ground with their message first among members of the German-speaking population, and soon among Hungarians, as well. The Methodist missions grew steadily, and soon comprised more than 1,000 members. But due to political developments following World War I, when Hungary was divided and lost two third of its territory, only one congregation remained with one pastor and 100 members. The Methodist congregations in the South belonged to Yugoslavia.

The United Methodist Church in Hungary strengthened again in the 1920s, new congregations were established and a strong social work system was organized. Another crisis followed World War II, due to the deportations of the German-speaking population and the resettlement of the Slovakian-speaking population in Slovakia. The congregations lost 60 percent of their membership. In addition, all church and social institutions were taken over by the State between 1946-49. Difficult years of restriction and isolation followed in the communist era for all the Churches, even the existence of the United Methodist Church in Hungary was threatened. All these eventually led to the split in 1974.

But new people put all their energy into the mission of the United Methodist Church in Hungary in the 1980s. And the political changes of 1989 provided new opportunities. New dimensions were added to the work of the church, and the congregations grew. At this time about 45 congregations built the Annual Conference in Hungary.

The United Methodist Church congregations in Hungary continue to report growth in their missionary and charity activities. They have built also a varied service for the gypsies (agricultural extension service, literacy courses, pre-marital counselling, etc.).

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN HUNGARY

The United Methodist Church in Hungary is also very active in ecumenical matters. It is a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council, the United Methodist Church and the Conference of European Churches.

ICELAND

Population:

348 580

(December 31, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

90%

**Evangelical Lutheran Church
of Iceland**

Þjóðkirkjan

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ICELAND

Þjóðkirkjan

Dioceses: 1

Deaneries: 9

Congregations: 260

Membership: 236 481

Bishop: 1

Suffragan bishops: 2

Pastors: 136

Iceland's Christian beginnings are traced back to the year 1000 when the Althingi (the Parliament) voted for the acceptance of Christianity. Two dioceses were established, Skalholt for the South (1056), and Holar for the North (1106), and monasteries were founded. The first Icelandic bishop was consecrated in Bremen in 1056.

The Icelandic church and people remained independent from 930 until 1262, when the country came under the rule of Norway and then, in 1380, that of Denmark. Some violence and a measure of Danish pressure accompanied the Althing's adoption of the Lutheran Church order (1541). Both dioceses received Lutheran bishops. Oddur Gottschalkssons' translation of the New Testament (1533-1540) was a landmark, as the publication saved the Icelandic language from becoming a Danish dialect. The first Icelandic Bible (1584) had a profound influence on the Icelandic language and culture.

The constitution of 1874 introduced religious freedom but stated that the Evangelical Lutheran Church is a national, established church, which it still is today. The Lutheran Church underwent a revival during this period, expressed in the establishment of a new theological college in 1874 and the church's involvement with various social and humanitarian activities. In 1998 a new law came into effect defining the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland as a free and independent church, and transferring the responsibility for most of the decisions from the Parliament to the Annual Church Assembly. At present 90 percent of the population are Lutherans, of which 85 percent belong to the

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ICELAND

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland, and 5 percent to Lutheran free congregations.

Since 1801, the entire island has been a single diocese with the bishop residing in Reykjavik. Presently there are two suffragan bishops in the old episcopal sees. The bishop is elected by pastors, professors of theology in the University of Iceland, and lay people from the deaneries. The bishop and the clergy meet annually in the Synod and deal with the church's concerns. The highest legislative authority of the church is the Church Assembly. It has 21 elected representatives, 9 clergy and 12 laymen, with a layperson as the president. The Church Assembly elects the Church Council, the highest executive authority, with two clergy and two laymen, presided by the bishop.

Missionary activities include evangelisation at home and outreach abroad. Icelanders have conducted missionary work in China, Ethiopia and Kenya. Icelandic Church Aid is active in emergency and development projects on other continents. The church has also women pastors.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

IRELAND

IRELAND

Church of Ireland

Methodist Church in Ireland

Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Population:

4 761 657
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

91%

CHURCH OF IRELAND

Dioceses: 12

Parishes: 450

Membership: 390 000

Bishops: 12

Priests: 500

The Church of Ireland is one church embracing Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and is able to trace its roots to the earliest days of Irish Christianity. It has 390,000 members - 275,000 in Northern Ireland and 115,000 in the Republic of Ireland and consists of two provinces, Armagh and Dublin, each with an Archbishop. There are 12 dioceses, over 450 parochial units and over 500 stipendiary clergy. It is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, is an apostolic church, maintaining an unbroken link with the early apostles and drawing on the apostolic faith in its teaching and worship and is a Catholic and Reformed church. There are three orders of sacred ministry: Bishops, Priests and Deacons. It has one Prayer Book called The Book of Common Prayer (2004) plus other services authorised for use by the General Synod. It is a representative church, with each diocese electing those who will represent them at the General Synod, the 'Parliament' of the church. In its General Synod there is a House of Bishops which has 12 members and a House of Representatives which has 216 clergy and 432 laity.

The Church of Ireland is member of the Porvoo Communion, the Conference of European Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. It has partnership links with indigenous churches, Christian institutions or international mission agencies in more than 25 countries around the world.

METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND

Districts: 8

Circuits: 68

Congregations: 271

Membership: 43 418

Pastors: 210

The Methodist Church in Ireland owes its origins largely to John and Charles Wesley who visited Ireland on many occasions, beginning with John Wesley's historic visit in 1747. He had come to see a Methodist Society (that was to become the first permanent Methodist Society in Ireland) already firmly established in Dublin by a Methodist preacher, a Welshman called Thomas Williams, who had been converted in England under Charles Wesley in 1738. From Dublin, the Wesleys journeyed into the midlands of Ireland and eventually, in 1756, John Wesley broke new ground when he visited the Palatines in County Limerick, penetrated into Connemara and Mayo in the far west and entered Ulster for the first time.

John Wesley visited Ireland twenty one times. The first Methodist building in Ireland was a chapel on Whitefriar Street in Dublin, built in 1752, the site of which was later expanded to contain a day school for boys, a school for orphan girls, a widows' alms-house, a book room and houses for two ministers. The Whitefriar Street congregation moved to St Stephen's Green in 1845, and now worships in Leeson Park.

Today the majority of Irish Methodists live in Northern Ireland. There are, however, Methodist Churches in most of the larger cities and towns of the island as well. The Irish Methodist Church includes both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It is the fourth largest Christian denomination in Northern Ireland.

The small groups have always been the lifeblood of Methodism. These congregations can be linked with up to six or seven other congregations in the local area to form a circuit, which is composed of one senior minister (Circuit Superintendent), other ministers, local preachers and a group of leaders from the member congregations.

METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND

There are 68 Methodist circuits on the island of Ireland, which have been gathered into 8 districts. Each district appoints a Superintendent and a Secretary to oversee the work and provide pastoral support to clergy.

The governing body of the Methodist Church in Ireland is the Annual Conference, usually held in the second week of June.

Although closely linked to British Methodism, the Methodist Church in Ireland is autonomous, with its own president (one-year appointment) and secretary. Irish Methodism has developed a wide ranging social-work service, largely through the activities of its city missions in Dublin, Londonderry, Belfast and Newtownabbey. In the educational field the church has two large grammar schools, an agricultural college and a theological college.

In 2002 a covenant was signed between the Methodist Church and the Church of Ireland (Anglican).

The Methodist Church in Ireland is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the World Methodist Council, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Presbyteries: 19
Congregations: 538
Membership: 224 333
Ministers: 361

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is a daughter church of the Church of Scotland. Irish Presbyterianism had its origins in Scottish migrations to Ulster in the early seventeenth century. Ballycarry Presbyterian Church in County Antrim is the oldest congregation dating back to 1613. The first presbytery was formed in 1642 by chaplains of a Scottish army who had come to Ireland because of an Irish Catholic rebellion. By the end of the seventeenth century Presbyterianism put down strong roots in Ireland. From the 1690s, Presbyterian congregations, organized in the Synod of Ulster, enjoyed practical freedom of religion, confirmed by the Toleration Act of 1719. In the eighteenth century the church was weakened by emigration to colonial America.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland was established in 1840 with the coming together of two Presbyterian Churches, the General Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod. The union of the two churches took place at the first General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Ireland meeting in Belfast on 10th July 1840.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is the largest Presbyterian denomination in Ireland, and the largest Protestant denomination in Northern Ireland. Like most Christian Churches in Ireland, it is organized on an all-island basis, in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Union Theological College in Belfast's Queen's Quarter, is the Church's principal body for the training of ministers prior to ordination. The church provides social services for a diverse range of people across Ireland.

The supreme governing body of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is the General Assembly. The senior figure of the General Assembly is the Moderator. This is an elected post and changes yearly. The Assembly

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

consists of all ministers, including retired ministers, and a representative elder from each congregation.

The Irish Presbyterian Church is a founder member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (the World Communion of Reformed Churches since 2010). It is also a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and the Conference of European Churches.

ITALY

ITALY

Christian Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy

Unione Cristiana Evangelica
Battista d'Italia

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy

Chiesa Evangelica Luterana
in Italia
Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche
in Italien

Evangelical Methodist Church in Italy

Chiesa Evangelica Metodista
in Italia

Waldensian Church in Italy

Chiesa Evangelica Valdese

Population:

60 497 174
(November 30, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

81%

CHRISTIAN EVANGELICAL BAPTIST UNION OF ITALY

Unione Cristiana Evangelica Battista d'Italia

Churches: 115

Membership: 5 750

The Baptist work in Italy began with the arrival of missionaries from Great Britain in 1863 and the USA in 1867. They established a few churches in some of the main towns and in some villages. The mission was transferred to Rome in 1870.

In 1905 a Baptist Theological School was started, but it was closed in 1932 under fascist persecution. Many places of worship were closed too. Until that time the Baptists had published three monthly magazines.

In 1921 the British missionaries withdrew, leaving the work in the hands of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention of the USA. In 1939 the “Opera Battista” was created. In 1949 the Baptist Theological School was reopened in Rivoli (Turin). There, a new generation of Baptist pastors was formed. The missionaries did not limit their work to opening churches. Together with the local churches they founded orphanages, hospitals, old people’s homes, cultural circles, schools and other institutions.

In 1956 the Italian Baptist churches organized themselves into the Baptist Union of Italy.

The Christian Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy is a member of the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the European Baptist Federation, the Baptist World Alliance, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ITALY

Chiesa Evangelica Luterana in Italia Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Italien

Congregations: 15

Membership: 7 000

Pastors: 17

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy was established in 1949.

The first Lutheran community in Italy was formed in Venice in 1650. Within the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, Lutheran churches were formed in Trieste (1778), Merano (1861) and Bolzano (1889). Under Prussian influence, communities were formed in Rome (1819), Naples (1826) and Florence (1899). Finally, German-speaking citizens established churches in Milan (1850), Sanremo (1870) and Genoa (1896). Lutheranism flourished in Naples and Torre Annunziata thanks to the missionary work of pastor Idelmo Poggioli. All the aforementioned communities were gathered in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy since 1949. Later other churches were formed, notably in Catania (1991), Verona (2008) and Turin (2009), under the supervision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy.

In 1961 the President of the Italian Republic recognized the existence of the Church with a decree. In 1967 the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy was established and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy was one of the co-founders. In 1995 the Parliament ratified the text of the Entente with the Italian Republic that governs the relationship of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy with the state.

The executive body is the Consistory, composed of two pastors and three laypersons. It is elected from the Synod and meets six times during the year. The legislative body is the General Assembly, called Synod, which meets once a year. It is headed by one president and one vice-president (laypersons), who are elected from the assembly every four years. The Synod is composed of all the pastors in service in the Church and of lay representatives of the congregations.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ITALY

The head of the Church is the dean. The dean and vice-dean remain in office for four years. They are appointed by the pastors-assembly and are elected by the Synod. The dean is the president of the Consistory.

The Church includes both German-speaking and Italian-speaking communities. It allows the ordination of women.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL METHODIST CHURCH IN ITALY

Chiesa Evangelica Metodista in Italia

Congregations: 53

Membership: 5 000

Active Clergy: 22

Methodism established itself in Italy in 1861, with the arrival from England of Methodist pastor Henry James Piggott (1831-1917), appointed by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

In 1871 the Methodist pastor Leroy M. Vernon (1838-1896) arrived from the United States and started a mission on behalf of Episcopal Methodist Church. He began his work in Modena, Bologna, Florence and Rome.

On 10 September 1874, in Bologna, Vernon brought together all the Italian and foreigner evangelists who were working with him, thus giving birth to the Methodist Episcopal Church of Italy. The structure of the young Church gradually began to take shape.

The Episcopal Methodist Church reached its widest diffusion during the years 1911-1935. At the same time, once again because of the financial crisis and the fascist regime, many of its achievements had to be renounced, both in the field of evangelization and the social and educational works.

Piggott and Vernon agreed that the two branches of Methodism that they represented would always work in a complimentary way in the establishment of new congregations and social ministries.

In the thirty-year period at the end of the century, the Methodism movement was notable for establishing schools, cultural centres, journals, and for a strong commitment in struggles for dignity and emancipation of the poorest, providing material and spiritual assistance in working-class areas with the highest level of needs.

Fascism and World War II posed a formidable crisis for the churches. When the war ended in May 1946 the union took place of the two branches of Italian Methodism and so the Evangelical Methodist Church of Italy was born as a District of the British Methodist Conference. In

EVANGELICAL METHODIST CHURCH IN ITALY

1948 the Italian Methodist Church took part in the founding of the World Council of Churches.

In 1962 it achieved full autonomy with its own Conference.

Since 1975, Methodist churches in Italy have joined Waldensian churches through a Covenant of Integration (Patto d'Integrazione). The Covenant gave birth to the Union of Methodist and Waldensian churches in Italy. The Covenant unites Methodist and Waldensian churches into one order, with a united Synod, shared regional organizations, and common order of pastors and deacons, while maintaining different denomination and regulation on the local church level, ecumenical relationships, finance and administration.

The executive body of the Evangelical Methodist Church in Italy is the "Comitato permanente" (CP). The CP is composed of the president and legal representative of the church and four members, elected annually. The CP meets every couple of months to discuss and decide on representation of Methodist churches in ecumenical (national and international) relations, management of Church's properties, collection of funds, salaries and pensions of pastors and deacons.

The Evangelical Methodist Church in Italy is engaged in social and charitable work in collaboration with other Evangelical Churches. It has been chosen to receive the 2017 World Methodist Peace Award for its work with and commitments to migrants and refugees dating back to 1989.

The Evangelical Methodist Church in Italy is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the World Methodist Council, the European Methodist Council, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

WALDENSIAN CHURCH IN ITALY

Chiesa Evangelica Valdese

Parishes: 123

Membership: 24 000

Pastors: 94

The Waldensian movement had its origins in the 12th century. It owes its birth to the decision of a rich merchant of Lyons, Valdes (or Waldo), who having abandoned his life as a merchant and given all of his goods to the poor, dedicated himself to live like the Apostles, following Jesus. Valdes commissioned a translation of several passages of the Bible into everyday language and, soon after, he and his followers started to preach the Gospel to the people of Lyons. These closely-connected decisions were not without consequences: at the Council of Verona in 1184 the movement was officially condemned and its adherents excommunicated in 1215.

During the middle Ages the Waldensians were scattered in different areas of Western and Central Europe: Southern France, Piedmont, Lombardy and Germany. They were systematically persecuted by the Roman Catholic Inquisition and condemned as “heretics”. They had deep links with the Hussite movement in Bohemia around 15th century.

In 1532 the Waldensian movement decided to join with the Reformation: from that moment on they became a reformed church whose theology, organization and confession of faith (published in 1655) were clearly influenced by Calvinism. During the 16th and 17th century the Waldensian Church, now located in four valleys of Piedmont, was persecuted many times by the authorities. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) in France, the Duke of Savoy forced the Waldensians to make a tragic choice: reject their faith or go into exile.

In 1686 thousands of Waldensians were forced to go into exile in Switzerland but three years later, in 1689, a military expedition of approximately 900 Waldensians was able to return to Piedmont. This episode is known as the “Glorious Return”.

WALDENSIAN CHURCH IN ITALY

During the 18th century this small minority was forced to live in an alpine ghetto, excluded from the cultural, social and political life of Piedmont at the time.

It was not until 1848 that they were given civil and political rights by King Charles Albert. Waldensians would receive religious freedom only after World War II.

Today the Waldensian Church is located not only in Italy but also in Uruguay and Argentina.

Waldensians and Methodists in Italy merged to become a united church in 1975: one church with one synod, but the two parts maintaining their individual identities, ecumenical and international relationships, finance and administration, and special projects.

The ecumenical scene in Italy is encouraging today. In addition to the dialogue with Judaism and with other living faiths, there are programmes of practical cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church, particularly the imminent founding of a consultation organ of the Christian churches in Italy. In 2015 Pope Francis paid the first visit by a pope to a Waldensian temple in Turin and a Waldensian delegation was received by the Pope in 2016.

The Synod is the highest decision making body within the Waldensian Church. All decisions concerning theology, discipline and organization are taken by the Synod. It consists of 180 members. The lay members make up the majority of the Synod.

Waldensians are mainly located in the so-called Waldensian valleys, to the west of Turin, where the congregations are numerically important. But they are also spread countrywide and in many Italian cities they represent an interesting partner for ecumenical and cultural dialogue. Even if there has not been a rise in the number of church members, every year there are new people who find in these churches a different way to live their Christian faith, to debate and to exercise democracy. Today an important challenge is represented by the remarkable number of evangelical immigrants who join the Waldensian churches, introducing

WALDENSIAN CHURCH IN ITALY

important changes. The commitment is “being church together” despite cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences.

Among the church’s institutions are a high school at Torre Pellice (near Turin), a theological faculty in Rome, a religious publishing house, the centre of Agape in North Italy (built by international youth teams after the war to provide a meeting place for young people concerned by the renewal of the church), and the diaconal centres in the Sicilian towns of Riesi and Palermo, which bring hope and help in a situation of poverty and apathy.

A strategic work area is represented by Waldensian Diaconia which manages social and welfare services for the elderly, minors, migrants, refugees and disabled people, without discrimination towards physical appearance and cultural, gender, or religious traditions, political opinions, or personal and social conditions. An example of this engagement can be found in the “Humanitarian Corridors” pilot project, carried out in Italy by the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy, the Community of Sant’Egidio and the Waldensian and Methodist Churches based on an agreement with the Italian Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs.

The Waldensian Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches.

LATVIA

Population:

1 924 700
(April 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

60%

**Evangelical-Lutheran Church
of Latvia**

Latvijas Evaņģēliski luteriskā
baznīca

**Latvian Evangelical Lutheran
Church Abroad**

Latviešu evaņģēliski luteriskā
Baznīca Vācijā

EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LATVIA

Latvijas Evaņģēliski luteriskā baznīca

Dioceses: 3

Congregations: 287

Membership: 42 000

Archbishop: 1

Bishops: 3

Pastors: 143

The beginnings of Christianity in Latvia go back to the 12th century. The Latvian people, inhabiting what was long called Livonia, were converted mainly during the period 1180–1290. The first bishop was consecrated in 1186.

Riga became one of the first cities to actively support Luther's ideas and Luther himself addressed several letters to the inhabitants of Riga. The Livonian capital Riga sympathized with the ideas of the Reformation already in early 1520 and was reformed in 1522 by the theologian Andreas Knopken. The Livonian confederation was the first territory outside of the present day German area to adopt the Reformation.

The Counter-Reformation, under the Polish Catholic reign, offered strong opposition, but Lutheranism remained the leading denomination till the end of the 17th century.

Although the majority of the Lutheran Church was German-speaking, the first Latvian pastor was ordained already in 1523. The first Lutheran service handbook in the Latvian language appeared in 1587 and the complete Bible in 1689. After the Russian rule replaced the Swedish (1721), Peter the Great was determined in 1832 to have one Lutheran Church in Russia, comprising five consistories or executive councils: in St Petersburg, Moscow, and the three Baltic regions of Estonia, Livonia, and (in the coastal south-west) the former German-ruled Courland (a Latvian tribal land).

The creation of the Republic of Latvia in 1918 was accompanied by significant changes in the structure and the spiritual life of the

EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LATVIA

Lutheran Church in Latvia. Already in 1919 there were 194 Lutheran congregations in Latvia, including 20 German-speaking congregations. The period between World War I and World War II was the golden age for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia. New churches were built, the congregations flourished and even a mission in Chennai, India was established.

The World War II and the sovietization of Latvia after the war were a period of great hardship and persecution for the church. After 45 years of ideological oppression people joined in the struggle for a truly dynamic, independent and free religious life.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia convened a Synod in April 1989 at which a new head and a completely new Consistory were elected. Dozens of new congregations were established all over Latvia and there was a dramatic lack of pastors. As the Faculty of Theology did not provide the education needed for the formation of clergy, the church had to establish its own educational institution – the Luther Academy. Annual conferences for pastors are organized under the leadership of the archbishop. Diaconal work has developed greatly during the last years and diaconal centres have been formed.

The highest decision-making body is the Synod which meets at least once every four years. Delegates to the Synod include the archbishop, bishops, members of the Consistory, deans, pastors and assistant pastors, pastoral duty executors and one lay representative from each congregation. The council of bishops represents the final authority in the overseeing of issues concerning Teaching and Sacraments. The Consistory is the highest decision-making body between the Synods. Members of the Consistory meet at least two times each year to approve the budget of the Church and to make decisions of policy. The Consistory is comprised of the Chapter and other ratified members. The Churches' committees are represented in the Consistory. The Consistory elects the secretary of the Consistory and the executive council of the Consistory. Meetings of the executive council of the Consistory are convened at least once a month.

EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LATVIA

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches. Officially the church has signed the Leuenberg Church Fellowship, but during the Soviet oppression no actual church discussion about this fellowship was held.

LATVIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH ABROAD

Latviešu evaņģēliski luteriskā Baznīca Vācijā

Congregations: 130

Membership: 25 000

Archbishop: 1

Pastors: 90

The Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad is the former Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia in Exile which established its headquarters in Germany after the occupation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union in the first years of World War II. The members of the church, about 120,000 at the time, scattered throughout Europe, North and South America, and Australia. The office of the archbishop moved from Germany to the USA, from there to Canada and then again back to Germany in 1994. Nevertheless, since the fall of the Soviet Union and the re-establishment of Latvian independence in 1991, despite some differences in outlook, the two churches have been able to recognize each other openly and work together more closely. In 1998 both churches adopted a common document of agreements as a framework for future cooperation. Both churches regard themselves as being in succession to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia that existed before the Second World War.

The church is much smaller now but its congregations are still spread widely over 15 countries, with the main concentrations in Canada, the USA and Australia. The archbishop is assisted by an 18-member church council which has executive powers.

During the years of exile the church a new translation of the Bible in Latvian was achieved. It has also produced a new hymnal and many theological books. It established a mission in Chennai, India. After the political changes in Eastern Europe the name of the church was changed to Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad, to signify that it is seeking to meet the realities and challenges of a trans-regional church in a long-term perspective.

LATVIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH ABROAD

In 2014 the church consecrated its first female archbishop, Lauma Zusevics.

The Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad is a member of the Porvoo Communion, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

LIECHTENSTEIN

Population:

38 111

(December 31, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

85,8%

**Evangelical Church in the
Principality of Liechtenstein**

Evangelische Kirche im
Fürstentum Liechtenstein

EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Evangelische Kirche im Fürstentum Liechtenstein

Churches: 1

Membership: 1 700

Pastors: 1

With the beginning of industrialization Protestants from neighbouring countries began to settle in Liechtenstein. In 1880 the Duke of Liechtenstein granted permission to hold Protestant worship services and to organize religious instruction for the children of Protestant families. Two other “Protestant Associations” later emerged in Vaduz / Schaan (1938) and Eschen / Mauren (1943). The latter was founded after the customs agreement with Switzerland and consisted largely of Swiss border officials and their families. In Vaduz/Schaan, the members of the Evangelical Society were mainly from Switzerland and Germany, who came in the context of industrialization into the country.

In 1944 the three “Protestant Associations” joined together to form the “Association of Protestants in the Principality of Liechtenstein”, which in 1961 gave itself the name “Evangelical Church in the Principality of Liechtenstein”.

Until 1952, the Protestant associations in Triesen, Vaduz and Mauren were cared for by the pastors of the neighbouring Protestant parishes in Switzerland and Vorarlberg. In 1952, thanks to the help of the St Gallen cantonal church and the Protestant church charitable organization of Switzerland, a part-time, then full-time pastorate was created in 1956. For several decades pastors from parishes across the border in Switzerland and Austria served the small community. In 1952 a pastor was named for Liechtenstein and in 1963 a church was built in Vaduz, the capital of Liechtenstein.

Through a special agreement the church is linked to the Evangelical-Reformed Church of St Gallen in Switzerland.

From the point of view of public law the church is constituted as an association.

LITHUANIA

Population:

2 803 332
(April 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

85%

**Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Lithuania**

Lietuvos evangelikų liuteronų
bažnyčia

Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche
in Litauen

LITHUANIA

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LITHUANIA

Lietuvos evangelikų liuteronų bažnyčia Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Litauen

Congregations: 58

Membership: 36 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 29

Reformation began spreading to Lithuania as early as 1520s. It was determined by two main factors - neighbouring Prussia (the first country to declare Lutheranism as a state religion in 1525) and Lithuanians who studied in Wittenberg, Leipzig and other protestant universities. Reformation spread among all parts of the society. First reformers faced harsh resistance from the Catholic authorities and had to seek asylum in Prussia. There the Koenigsberg University was founded in 1544.

The form of church government is episcopal-synodical. The first Synod of the Lutheran Church in Lithuania was convened in Vilnius in 1557, 14th December. In 1648 the Synod adopted the Saxon model of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. In 1780 the Synod established an independent Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Consistory (that started functioning on the 17th of February, 1782) and in 1784 the Synod divided Lithuania into three church districts. In 1832 both the Lithuanian Lutheran Synod and the Consistory were abolished by the Russian Tsar's order, after a major part of Lithuania came under Russia in 1795. Lithuania's Lutheran parishes were joined to the Curonian Consistory with the administrative centre in St Petersburg. Later, a part of Vilnius County and the right bank side of the Nemunas River were joined to Warsaw Consistory.

Meanwhile, since 1613 Lithuania Minor had its own Consistory established in Koenigsberg. When in 1660 Prussia ultimately united with Brandenburg, the Koenigsberg Consistory was included into Berlin General Consistory. In 1817, by the decision of Friedrich Wilhelm III, the King of Prussia, Evangelical Lutheran and Evangelical Reformed Churches were formally merged to the Prussian Evangelical Church. Some Lutheran parishes have never accepted the Prussian Union.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LITHUANIA

After Lithuania's independence in 1918, and the northern part of the Lithuania Minor Klaipėda district was joined to the Republic of Lithuania in 1923, there was a strong need to unite all Lutheran parishes. Nevertheless, Lutherans in Klaipėda district maintained their own administrative structures and remained under supervision of the Königsberg Synod. Only in 1955, after World War II, the remaining parishes in the district were formally joined to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania.

Though in the rest of Lithuania Lutherans were numbering around 70,000, they were also divided by the language. 30,000 of them were Lithuanians, 26,000 were German-speaking, and 14,000 were Latvian-speaking. In 1919 in Kaunas, during the first Synod in the independent Republic of Lithuania, necessity for ethnically based Synods became evident. Therefore from 1920 to 1941 each ethnic group formed their Synod which would elect delegates for the Consistory, the supreme body of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania. The President of the Republic of Lithuania used to appoint the president and the vice-president for the Consistory of the delegates elected by Synods.

In 1938, 9.56 percent of 2.7 million population of the country was Evangelical (Lutherans and Reformed). Due to Soviet occupation in 1940 the Lutheran part of the population decreased to almost 90 percent. A few pastors who remained in Lithuania tried hard to keep the church alive under all persecutions. A Consistory was constituted in 1941 and 1950. And only in 1955 the first Synod after World War II was convened.

By 1988 there were only 25 Lutheran parishes left. National revival and restoration of Lithuania's independence provided the church with an opportunity to re-establish parishes and various activities, which could not be practiced under Soviet occupation. In 2001 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania had 55 parishes served by about 25 clergymen (incl. deacons). Since 1990 Synods meet regularly every 5 years. The Consistory consisting of clergy and laity selected for service by the bishop and the Synod regulates in collaboration with the bishop all church activity between meetings of the Synod.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LITHUANIA

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania is a member of the Porvoo Communion and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe. It is also a member of the Lutheran World Federation and the Conference of European Churches.

LUXEMBOURG

Population:

602 005

(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

74%

**Protestant Churches in
Luxembourg**

Protestantesch Kierch vu
Letzebuerg

Protestantische Kirchen in
Luxemburg

Églises protestantes
luxembourgeoises

PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN LUXEMBOURG

Protestantesch Kierch vu Letzebuerg Protestantische Kirchen in Luxemburg Églises protestantes luxembourgeoises

Parishes: 6

Membership: 2 000

Pastors: 3

The 16th century Reformation never got a firm footing in Luxembourg and the Jesuits carried through the Counter-Reformation very actively. Only in 1768 the first Protestant, Ambroise Henke, got permission to settle down in Luxembourg. After the Congress of Vienna, the Holy Trinity Church in the city centre was left to the Prussian garrison in 1817. In the following years it served the civilian community. In 1894, the Protestant parish was granted its statute through a grand ducal decree. And that is the way a “united” Protestant Church came to life before this term even existed, as its statute specifies it combines both the Augsburg creed (Lutheranism) and the Helvetian creed (Calvinism).

Protestantism developed with the arrival of employees and workers who were attracted by the expanding iron-industry. Several service locations were established: not only in Luxembourg-city, but also particularly in Esch-sur-Alzette in the south of the country, the stronghold of the iron industry. In 1998 the Protestant Church of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the government signed a convention which updated the statutes of 1894.

Protestant Churches in Luxembourg represent the Protestant Church of Luxembourg and the Reformed Protestant Church of Luxembourg.

The Protestant Church of Luxembourg is a consistorial church composed of the parish of Luxembourg-city and three further parishes: Ettelbruck, Wiltz and Oberkorn. The General Assembly of the church elects every three years half the members of the Consistory, the executive body, each for a six year term. The Consistory runs the consistorial secretariat. The Consistory is responsible to the General Assembly. The General Assembly

PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN LUXEMBOURG

and the Consistory together elect one of the active pastors of the church to serve as the ecclesiastical president.

The Protestant Church of Luxembourg uses the three official languages of the country (Luxembourgish, French and German) for all its activities and services.

There is cooperation with the foreign Protestant parishes represented in Luxembourg (the German, the Danish, the French and the Dutch) within the framework of an Alliance. The Alliance participates actively in the ecumenical affairs within the scope of the Council of Christian Churches.

The Consistory of the Reformed Protestant Church of Luxembourg is composed of 6 people plus one pastor.

NETHERLANDS

NETHERLANDS

Mennonite Church in the Netherlands

Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit

Old-Catholic Church of the Netherlands

Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland

Protestant Church in the Netherlands

Protestantse Kerk in Nederland

Remonstrant Church

Remonstranten

Remonstrante Kirche

Population:

17 215 600
(April 25, 2018)

Main religion:

Non-Religious

Christianity:

47%

MENNONITE CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS

Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit

Congregations: 121

Membership: 10 200

Pastors: 96

The Mennonite Church in the Netherlands is a body of Mennonite Christians in the Netherlands. The Mennonites (also known as Mennisten or Doopsgezinden) are named from Menno Simons (1496–1561), a Dutch Roman Catholic priest from the Province of Friesland who converted to Anabaptism around 1536. He is considered one of the best known leaders of the Reformation alongside Luther, Calvin and Zwingli. Simons is the only widely-recognized Reformer of Dutch descent. He was re-baptized as an adult in 1537 and became part (and soon leader) of the Dutch Anabaptist movement. It originated in the south of Germany and in Switzerland. From there it spread along the Rhine to the north. The main issue was the rejection of the baptism of children, and - in general - a non-violent way of life.

According to Menno, the Reformers over-emphasized justification by faith and neglected the sanctification of life. The Mennonites in the Netherlands, like their German brethren, were more radical than the Reformers in rejecting the institutional church and the doctrine of the two sacraments, and in emphasizing the separation of church and state. Because of their religious convictions the followers of this Church exempted themselves from military services and taxes and also on account of their withdrawal from society and their strong eschatological expectations they were persecuted. The persecutions brought many Mennonites to spread all over northern Europe, later in Russia and also in America.

In the Netherlands several Baptist groups existed for a long time, but only since 1811 they have formed the General Baptist Brotherhood. Twice a year all representatives from municipalities get together in “the brotherhood meeting”. This meeting forms the highest body of the Brotherhood, and it also governs the municipalities.

During the period of the Republic of the Netherlands there was greater tolerance, but divisions surfaced in Mennonite ranks. After Menno's

MENNONITE CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS

death, his followers in the Netherlands split into a number of local factions. There were of Waterlandic, Frisian and Flemish denominations. From the 18th century onward, many Mennists evolved from a rather orthodox view to a decidedly liberal one. At the end of the century, there was considerable upheaval and the “patriots” inspired by events in the American colonies strove for sweeping reform in the rather archaic institutions of the Republic. In the century that followed, many of the more orthodox members of the ‘doopsgezinden’ decided to leave and join the more conservative Dutch Reformed Church. Mission work among the group also began in the 19th century, carrying on into the early 20th century. The group chose Central Java and New Guinea as mission fields. Strong ties still exist between these communities (now in Indonesia) and today’s Dutch groups.

The communities lacked educated pastors. A first seminary for the training of preachers was founded in Amsterdam in 1735. The ADS (General Mennonite Society) was inaugurated in 1811, mainly to organize a college for the training of pastors for all different Mennonite communities in the country. In the process, unification of the divisions occurred. Originally the ADS had little authority, but it developed into a more central organ in the 20th century. Although its core task is still to maintain the Mennonite seminary in the Netherlands, its work has broadened into organizing branches of relief and peace work, and mission. New emphasis is laid on mediation training and service. It is also the ADS, of which all 121 local Mennonite communities are members, that represents the Dutch Mennonites in national and international church bodies. The ADS maintains close relations with sister communities in Germany, Great Britain, France, Spain, Switzerland, Brazil, Paraguay, Canada and the United States. The Mennonite Church was the first denomination in the Netherlands to allow women to be ordained as ministers. The church first adopted acceptance of women to the priesthood in 1905. In 1911, Anne Zernike became the first woman minister in the country.

The Mennonite Church in the Netherlands is a member of the Conference of European churches and the World Council of Churches.

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE NETHERLANDS

Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland

Dioceses: 2

Parishes: 27

Membership: 10 000

Bishops: 2

Priests: 40

Christianity was brought to the Netherlands by the Anglo-Saxon monks. St Willibrord (739 AD) preached in the northern parts of the Netherlands (above the Rhine), bringing Catholicism to the country in the 7th century. The southern parts of the now so-called Benelux were already evangelized from the 4th century, beginning with St Servatius, Bishop of Maastricht († 384). St Willibrord had been consecrated by Pope Sergius I in 696 in Rome. Phillip II of Spain secured the creation of five new sees under Utrecht, which was raised to an Archbishopric in 1560. The experiment was a failure, and from 1580 to 1853 the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands was without territorial bishops, being governed by apostolic vicars or papal representatives. From 1583 to 1795 it was subjected by the government to severe penal restrictions. In 1697 Rome launched accusations of Jansenism against the Roman Catholics in the Netherlands, notably against Petrus Codde (1648–1710), then vicar-general and titular Archbishop of Philippi. He was censured in 1702 and a schism began. His followers upheld the continuity of their communion with the national Catholic Church of the past. The support of the French Jansenists, who refused to accept the bull “Unigenitus” (1713), secured for the Old-Catholics, as they came to be called, the maintenance of the apostolic succession. The group still survives as a branch of the Old-Catholic Church. After the declaration of the infallibility of the Pope in 1870, Old-Catholic Churches have been established in several other countries, e.g. in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. In later years Old-Catholic Churches came into being in the USA, Poland and in other countries in Eastern Europe. Since 1889 these churches have been united in the Union of Utrecht.

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE NETHERLANDS

There exists intercommunion with the Churches of the Anglican Communion. In 1925, and since 1932, Old-Catholics have been in full communion with the Church of England.

A dialogue was started even earlier with the Orthodox churches.

Obligatory celibacy was abolished at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1998 the Old-Catholic Church in the Netherlands opened the priesthood to women.

The organization of the church is episcopal and synodical, which allows for ample participation and input of the faithful. The laity and the clergy of the two dioceses are represented in the national synod, together with the two bishops. There is an advisory synod composed of representatives from the parishes and the clergy. Communion is frequently given in both kinds. The liturgy is celebrated in the Dutch language. The church has made valuable contributions to the study of ancient hymnology and sponsored the translation of the Gregorian chant in Dutch. It still plays a role as a bridge between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant churches.

The Old-Catholic Church of the Netherlands is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches and the International Old-Catholic Bishops' Conference.

PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS

Protestantse Kerk in Nederland

Congregations: 2 500

Membership: 2 500 000

Pastors: 3 000

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands came into being on May 1st, 2004, through the merger of two streams of the Reformed (Calvinistic) tradition and one of the Lutheran church: 1) the Netherlands Reformed Church, 2) the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, 3) and the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The merger was the culmination of an organizational process started in 1961.

The “established church” in the Netherlands after the Reformation was Calvinistic. It had adopted the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt. When the Netherlands became a monarchy in 1815, the king gave it a church order and the church received the name of the Netherlands Reformed Church. This action of the State was one of the reasons for two separations in 1834 and 1886. The two groups that separated merged together in 1892 to form the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Besides the Calvinistic mainstream there had also been an Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands since 1556. In the aftermath of World War II there was an increasing awareness in the two large Reformed Churches that their continued separation could not but affect the credibility of the gospel. In 1961 a group of 18 young theologians, all working in ministries on the frontiers of church and society, called on the synods to set out on a common journey. Discussions began. In 1986 the synods declared that they were in a “state of union”. It was decided that a new church order was necessary. This church order was adopted in 2003. In addition to the three ecumenical creeds and the above-mentioned confessions of the church also accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther’s Catechism.

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands has four different types of congregations: 1) Protestant congregations: local congregations

PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS

from different church bodies that have merged, 2) Dutch Reformed congregations, 3) Reformed congregations (congregations of the former Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) 4) Lutheran congregations (congregations of the former Evangelical-Lutheran Church).

At the national level there is total union. Locally the congregations have the freedom to unite (several hundreds have done so) or to maintain the specific tradition they belonged to before the union.

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands has adopted the Presbyterian-synodical model of church governance with a board and a moderator and general secretary. Church governance is organized along local, regional, and national lines. At the local level is the congregation.

An individual congregation is led by a church council made of the minister along with elders and deacons elected by the congregation.

At the regional level are the regional ecclesial assemblies, known as 'classical assemblies' whose members are chosen by the church councils. At the national level is the General Synod which directs areas of common interest, such as theological education, ministerial training and ecumenical cooperation. In order to safeguard the position of the Lutheran minority there is also an Evangelical Lutheran Synod. All those registered as Lutheran members of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands may participate in direct elections for this Synod. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod delegates an additional number of five representatives into the General Synod.

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands is the largest Protestant Church in the Netherlands. The missionary and diaconal work of the church is carried out in cooperation with several smaller churches in the Netherlands. The church maintains international relationships with many partner churches in all parts of the world (e.g. more than thirty in Indonesia).

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

REMONSTRANT CHURCH

Remonstranten Remonstrante Kirche

Congregations: 46
Membership: 10 000
Pastors: 45

The Remonstrants are Dutch Protestants who, after the death of Jacobus Arminius, continued to maintain the views associated with his name. In 1610, they presented to the States of Holland and Friesland a remonstrance in five articles formulating their points of disagreement with Calvinism. According to 2010 statistics, a 6,000-strong Remonstrant community remains in the Netherlands. There is also a single congregation in Friedrichstadt in northern Germany.

Until 1795 the Remonstrants were not officially tolerated. Many, among them Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), the “father” of international law, had to leave the country.

The Synod of Dordrecht (1618-19) expelled the Remonstrants (as they were called) and dismissed 200 ministers, many of whom were banished or imprisoned. These ministers formed themselves into a “brotherhood”, a description later taken over by Remonstrant-Reformed congregations. From 1630, persecution slackened and churches were built.

In the 18th century the Church had significant influence on Methodism and in the 19th century on theological liberalism. It was not until the end of the 19th century that it underwent remarkable growth; this was because, through its tradition of tolerance and openness to new ideas, the Brotherhood was receptive to ‘modernism’ renaissance.

By 1860, the membership of the Brotherhood had fallen to 4,000, but then, as a result of the rise of religious modernism in terms of biblical criticism, modern science and philosophy, response to modern culture, and secularization, the Brotherhood with its evangelical freedom began to appeal to many people. Membership increased five-fold. In recent years it has somewhat decreased again. One congregation has been

REMONSTRANT CHURCH

located since 1621 in Friedrichstadt a/d Eider in Schleswig-Holstein (Germany).

The Brotherhood has its own institution for training ministers, the Remonstrant Seminary, which was founded in Amsterdam in 1634 and since 1873 has been associated with the theological faculty of Leiden University. There are 46 congregations spread throughout the country. In principle, each congregation is independent, governed by a Church Council. Most of the work is done by members of the congregation, who devote part of their spare time to fostering religious life in pastorate, diaconate, observance and preparation. Most of the congregations have one or more ministers, male or female, on a full or part-time basis. The organizational structure of the Church is Presbyterian-Congregational.

The representatives of the congregations meet twice a year. One of these meetings is the General Deliberative Assembly, which deals with subjects requiring debate and decision at national level. Important themes in recent years have been positive tolerance, the communication of faith. The other meeting is the General Administrative Assembly, at which decisions relating to the Remonstrant Brotherhood as a national church are taken.

The Remonstrant Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches.

NORWAY

Population:

5 295 619
(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

89%

Church of Norway

Den norske kirke
Den norske kyrkja
Norgga girku

CHURCH OF NORWAY

Den norske kirke
Den norske kyrkja
Norgga girku

Dioceses: 11

Deaneries: 101

Congregations: 1 207

Membership: 3 884 652

Bishops: 12 (11 diocesan bishops, one presiding bishop)

Pastors: 1 282

The Church of Norway has represented the main expression of religious belief in Norway for a thousand years. It has belonged to the Evangelical Lutheran branch of the Christian church since the 16th century, and has been a State church until 2012.

The Christian faith came to Norway in the 9th century. It was brought to Western Norway by missionaries from the British Isles, and to eastern Norway by missionaries from Germany and Friesland (Netherlands), by way of Denmark. The missionaries were monks, Vikings who had been converted to Christianity abroad, and bishops. Norwegian kings too played an important part in the country's Christianization. By the end of the 12th century the Christian church was firmly established in Norway, as in the other Nordic countries.

The Reformation came to Norway mainly as a result of King Christian III of Denmark and Norway. In 1537 he established the Evangelical Lutheran faith as the official religion of Norway and Denmark. In 1660 the Evangelical Lutheran Church was placed entirely under State control. From the early 18th century on, Pietism – the individually oriented Lutheran movement which emerged in Germany around 1670 – had a profound impact on Norwegian church life. The movement reached the country in the 1730's, faded around 1750 and gained a more permanent foothold in the 19th century. During World War II the church firmly opposed the Nazi regime and played a vigorous part in the civil resistance throughout the country.

CHURCH OF NORWAY

The major church reform of the 20th century has been the legal establishment of parish councils (1920), diocesan councils (1933), the National Council (1969), diocesan synods (1984) and the General Synod (1984). The General Synod, the highest decision-making body, meets annually. The National Council, the Synod's executive body, meets between synods. The National Council is moderated by an elected moderator. The Bishops' Conference, which had been an official body since 1934, also received legal status in 1984. The Bishops' Conference is a member of the Synod and is moderated by the presiding bishop of the Church of Norway. The Council on Ecumenical and International Relations is the executive in international and ecumenical matters.

Since 1989 parish pastors, who had from 1660 been appointed by the king, are being appointed by church bodies: the diocesan councils.

Congregations are organized in parishes, belonging to deaneries. The deaneries are gathered in dioceses. Dioceses are headed by an elected Diocesan Council and led by a bishop.

On 21 May 2012, the Norwegian Parliament passed a constitutional amendment that granted the Church of Norway increased autonomy. In the new wording of the Constitution there is no longer reference to an "official religion of the State." The church is designated as "Norway's folk church". From January 2017 Church of Norway is an independent legal entity.

The Church of Norway is active in building bridges between churches.

The Church of Norway is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

NORTH MACEDONIA

**United Methodist Church
Macedonia**

Евангелско методистичка
црква во македонија

Population:

2 083 160
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

70,7%

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MACEDONIA

Евангелско методистичка црква во македонија

Congregations: 12

Membership: 2 000

Clergy: 3 (+ 3 active retirement)

In the 19th century missionaries from the USA laid the cornerstone for Protestant work in the territory of what is now North Macedonia. Macedonian freedom fighters, trying to pry their country loose from the Ottoman Empire, also contributed to this early work. Captured and sent to prison in Thessaloniki, their hearts were changed, and after being released, they returned home with a new mission: to spread the Gospel. However, the Methodist mission in North Macedonia would never have developed so well without the faith and courage of “Bible women” who travelled to remote areas in spite of poor roads and the scorn, stone-throwing, and brutality of scoffers. These “Bible women” not only shared the Gospel; they taught other women to read and write (which meant that these women could now also read the Bible), organized sewing groups and nursing courses, and provided people with help and advice in all sorts of areas. In nearly every place where the “Bible women” were active, there appeared not just local schools, but also congregations.

Yet these newly founded congregations faced a high level of initial resistance, even though their members always worked for the good of the entire community. Their meeting houses were burned, and in the beginning, those who converted to Christianity were often thrown into prison. But the congregations survived.

For more than ten years, the United Methodist Church has been officially recognized by North Macedonia.

The congregations have developed evangelization programs and social efforts for the Roma, and organize regular international youth camps with participants from North Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Germany, and the USA.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MACEDONIA

Institutional services and social support for individuals are equally important.

There is a very active and diverse dialogue with other Churches (Orthodox, Catholic) and religious communities (Jews, Muslims).

The United Methodist Church congregations of North Macedonia and Serbia form one organizational unit (Annual Conference) with two districts.

The United Methodist Church Macedonia is a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council, the United Methodist Church and the Conference of European Churches.

POLAND

Population:

38 422 346
(June 30, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

90%

Baptist Union of Poland

Kościół Chrześcijan Baptystów
w RP

**Evangelical Church of
the Augsburg Confession
in Poland**

Kościół Ewangelicko-
Augsburskiego (Luterański)
w Polsce

**Evangelical Reformed Church
in Poland**

Kościół Ewangelicko-
Reformowany w RP

**Old-Catholic Mariavite Church
in Poland**

Kościół Starokatolicki
Mariawitów

Alt-Katholische Kirche der
Mariaviten in Polen

**Polish Autocephalous
Orthodox Church**

Polski Autokefaliczny Kościół
Prawosławny

**Polish Catholic Church
(Old-Catholic)**

Kościół Polskokatolicki w RP

**United Methodist Church
in Poland**

Kościół Ewangelicko-
Metodystyczny w RP

BAPTIST UNION OF POLAND

Kościół Chrześcijan Baptystów w RP

Churches: 96

Membership: 5 250

The beginning of the Baptist movement in Poland dates to the second half of the 19th century. In 1858, Gottfried F. Alf started his work as a teacher in the village Adamow. The first church was formed among German-speaking Poles in Adamow by Alf and missionary Wilhelm Wiest. It was organized into an independent congregation in 1861. Another one was founded shortly afterward in Kicin. The first typical Polish-speaking congregation was formed in the village of Zelow in 1872. Polish Baptists adopted the German Baptist Confession of 1847 as their own confession.

In 1922, the Union of Slavic Baptists in Poland was formed, and in 1928, the Union of the Baptist Churches of the German Language was formed. The unions of German-speaking and Polish-speaking Baptists existed until World War II, when they were forced into merging with other Evangelical Christian bodies. After 1947, the Baptists emerged as a small separate body. In 1990, the Biblical Theological Seminary in Wrocław was started by the Baptist Union.

The Baptist Union of Poland is a member of the European Baptist Federation, the Baptist World Alliance and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN POLAND

Kościół Ewangelicko-Augsburskiego (Luterański) w Polsce

Congregations: 133

Membership: 61 582

Pastors: 158 (including deacons)

The history of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland begins with the Reformation movement. The Lutheran Reformation made early gains in the region. The point of entry was East Prussia where Germans and Poles lived in friendly co-existence. The Lutheran Church in East Prussia continued to use Polish until well into the 19th century. However, the Counter-Reformation was aggressive and erased most of Lutheranism. The complete partitioning of Poland by Russia, Austria and Prussia in 1795 opened a new phase of religious history. Large Lutheran congregations were formed in the cities. In Prussia's part of Poland, strong congregations developed in Silesia.

The characteristic feature of the Polish Reformation was the religious tolerance. Reformation gave rise to the development of the ecumenical movement which might be the reason for the unifying Synod of the Reformed and the Czech Brethren Churches.

When, in 1918, Poland regained its independence, the Church had 500,000 members. World War II hindered the process of gaining stability within the Church. During the war many pastors were arrested and sent off to concentration camps in Germany. After the war the number of church members decreased due to the government policy and emigration to Germany.

The bishop is the spiritual leader of the Church. The highest authority of the Church is the Synod. It guides all the Church rites and obligations and takes decisions on all vital Church issues. The Consistory holds the highest administrative and executive power. The basic administrative unit of the Church is the parish. Each congregation is self-governed by a presbytery or parish council.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland maintains contacts with other Churches throughout Europe and beyond. It has

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN POLAND

bi-lateral relations with, among others, the Evangelical Churches in Germany, to Sweden, Lithuania, Austria, USA, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Denmark.

It is also a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Polish Ecumenical Council, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH IN POLAND

Kościół Ewangelicko-Reformowany w RP

Congregations: 10 + 3 large Diaspora groups

Membership: 3 500

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 9

The beginnings of the Reformed Church in Poland go back to the 1540s, when the teaching of the Swiss reformers Zwingli and Calvin began to make their way to Poland. The most influential group was found in the country's capital Kraków. The first Reformed church service was held in 1550 in Pińczów. The first Reformed synod in Lesser Poland (Polish: Małopolska, Latin: Polonia Minor), historical region (dzielnica) of Poland, was held in 1564 in Słomniki, close to Kraków. Thus the Lesser Poland Brethren was formed. In the meantime in the North of Poland another Reformed church was formed. The Czech Brethren, persecuted by the Czech king Ferdinand I Habsburg (1503-1564), fled to Greater Poland (1548). The number of their congregations quickly swelled. Thus the Greater Poland Brethren also called the Czech Brethren, was formed. The Lesser Poland Brethren formed a strongly synodical structure, while the Greater Poland church became more Presbyterian.

The return of Jan Łaski to Poland in 1556, who was famous for his reforming activities in Western Europe, strengthened the young church. In 1570 three churches - the Reformed, Lutheran and Czech Brethren - adopted the Consensus of Sandomir, an irenic translation of the Second Helvetic Confession, which allowed them to unite their forces. The Reformed opened schools in Pińczów, Leszno, Kraków, Vilnius, Kėdainiai and Ślusk, printed the first complete Bible in Polish. For some decades the Reformation movement constituted an important factor in the national life of Poland. The Counter-Reformation not only put an end to the Reformation's expansion, but also led to its marginalization.

In the 18th century, when the rights of Dissenters were recognized (1768), the church was reconstituted and was able to continue its activity despite the loss of national independence (1795-1918). World War II

EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH IN POLAND

affected also the Reformed. Many congregations were suppressed and services ceased. Warsaw was completely destroyed by the Germans, although the church managed to survive. The number of members was dropping even more, as the German and Czech Reformed were emigrating from Poland. Old Reformed churches in West Poland were taken over by the Catholics. The lack of pastors was acute till the end of the 1950s. Some Polish Reformed stayed in the West and formed the London Reformed Polish Church that existed until 1991.

The church membership consists of native Polish people, immigrants from Western Europe and Czech Brethren. They each preserve their own language and customs. The church is a close partner of the Reformed Church of France.

The church is administered by a consistory elected every three years, and chaired by a lay person. The official representative of the church is its bishop, elected for a ten-year term. The highest ecclesiastical governing body is the synod, which convenes every year and has lay and clergy delegates from all of its congregations.

OLD-CATHOLIC MARIAVITE CHURCH IN POLAND

Kościół Starokatolicki Mariawitów Alt-Katholische Kirche der Mariaviten in Polen

Dioceses: 4

Parishes: 30

Membership: 25 000 in Poland and 5 000 in France

Bishops: 4

Priests: 25

The Old-Catholic Mariavite Church in Poland separated from the Roman Catholic Church in Poland in 1906. The founders of the Old-Catholic Mariavite Church were John Kawalski, a diocesan priest, and Sister Maria Felicja Kozłowska of the Third Order of Franciscans, who is considered the foundress of Mariavitism. This community developed out of the community of sisters founded by the latter in Plock in 1888 and the community of secular priests organized at her instigation by Kowalski in 1893. Both groups adopted the Franciscan rule and aimed at a religious, moral and social renewal of clergy and people.

The new church recognized the first seven ecumenical councils. At a later stage, celibacy of the clergy was made optional, and confession was made voluntary.

The Old-Catholic Mariavite Church received the apostolic succession from the Old-Catholic Church of the Netherlands in 1909.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the entire liturgy are celebrated exclusively in the language of the people.

The authorities of the Old-Catholic Mariavite Church are comprised of the Synod, the General Chapter, the Church Council, the Prime Bishop, the Diocesan Bishop, the Parish Assembly, the Parish Council and the Pastor.

One of the four dioceses of the Old-Catholic Mariavite Church is in France.

The Prime Bishop is the chairman of the Church Council and represents the Church externally.

The Old-Catholic Mariavite Church in Poland is a member of the World Council of Churches (1969) and the Conference of European Churches.

POLISH AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Polski Autokefaliczny Kościół Prawosławny

Dioceses: 7

Monasteries: 12 (6 male, 6 female)

Parishes: 266

Membership: 600 000

Metropolitan: 1

Bishops: 9

Priests: 380

The first Orthodox diocese in Poland was established in the 10th century.

When Poland was restored as an independent country in the wake of World War I, nearly 4,000,000 Orthodox Christians were included within its new boundaries. Most of these were ethnic Belarusians and Ukrainians in the eastern parts of the country who had been under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. In 1918 an independent Polish state came into being once more and the metropolitan of the Polish Orthodox Church endeavoured to secure autocephalous status for the church. This was achieved in 1924 through the Ecumenical Patriarchate; autocephaly was proclaimed officially in Poland in 1925 and was recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1948.

During the interwar period there were some tensions within the Polish Orthodox Church, because the most of bishops were Russian, while most of the faithful were not Russians, but Ukrainians and Belarusians. These period was also accompanied by a number of difficulties for the Orthodox Church and its population. With the consent of the Polish state authorities, the Roman Catholic Church seized part of the properties belonging to the Orthodox Church. In 1938 over 100 churches were demolished or changed into Roman Catholic temples.

When the eastern border of the country was altered after the World War II, a large tract of the country with its Orthodox population became Soviet territory and came once again under the Russian Orthodox Church. Consequently the number of the Orthodox in the People's Republic of Poland shrank from 5 million to less than half a million.

POLISH AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH

After the democratic changes in the country in 1991 a special law on the relations between the State and the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church was passed. It guarantees equal rights for the church and makes it possible to establish work in the army and to recover some of the church properties. Some tension remains in the relations with the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, despite the new ecumenical climate. In recent years the Polish Orthodox Church has become more integrated into Polish culture, and Polish is being used in the liturgy more often.

The Holy Sobor (council), consisting of all the bishops (currently nine), under the presidency of the metropolitan, is the highest authority. The metropolitan council is the advisory board made up of representatives of the clergy and the laity, from whom the presidium is elected. Priests are trained at the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Warsaw and the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw, which has an Orthodox section offering a five-year course. There is also a department of Orthodox theology at the University in Białystok. Special Orthodox religious courses are also offered by the school of Orthodox iconography in Bielsk Podlaski and the school of Orthodox singing in Hajnowka.

The head of the church is His Beatitude Sawa, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland.

The Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

POLISH CATHOLIC CHURCH (OLD-CATHOLIC)

Kościół Polskokatolicki w RP

Dioceses: 3

Parishes: 80

Membership: 50 000

Bishop: 1

Priests: 72

The Polish Catholic Church in Poland came into being through a missionary campaign launched in Poland after the First World War, when the state regained independence, by the Polish National Catholic Church in the USA. This Church has been known within Poland until 1951 as the Polski Narodowy Kościół Katolicki (PNKK), it has its origins in the final decade of 19th century. During this time, Polish immigrants in the United States participated in the protests of lay people in Roman Catholic parishes against the domination of clergy of German and Irish origins. Polish members of the Roman Catholic Church demanded from their English-speaking bishops the right to participate in administrative matters of their parishes, in the election of priests and bishops, and more worship services in the Polish language. After the unsuccessful presentation of their requests to the Vatican in 1898, the Polish National Catholic Church was formally founded in Scranton, Pennsylvania, out of a number of independent Polish parishes. After the consecration of the Reverend Franciszek Hodur as a bishop in 1907, the newly organized church community became a member of the Union of Utrecht of Old-Catholic Churches. After the surname of the head of the church, Hodur, members of the PNCC were often named Hodurowcy (Hodur people). After realizing the necessity of establishing and maintaining contact with Poland, Bishop Hodur worked to establish the PNCC in that country. According to the religious and social precepts of the PNCC, there was an obligation to serve their country of origin, Poland.

The PCCP is formulated in common symbols of faith and decisions of the first seven Ecumenical Councils. The Polish Catholic Church has many similarities to the Roman Catholic liturgy in that it expresses Trinitarian

POLISH CATHOLIC CHURCH (OLD-CATHOLIC)

doctrine, Marian devotion and reverence for the saints. The church also employs the Catholic liturgical calendar.

The PCCP is united in faith and practice with the Polish National Catholic Church in the USA and Canada. Since 1997 the church is engaged in an official dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.

The PCCP is organized into three dioceses: Warsaw, Wroclaw and Krakow. A considerable number of the members live in the southern and eastern area of the country. The highest authority is the General Synod composed of clergy and laity, which meets every five years. The Synodical Council is the executive body in between meetings of the Synod. Priests are trained at the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw.

The Polish Catholic Church in Poland is a member of the Union of Utrecht of Old-Catholic Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN POLAND

Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny w RP

Congregations: 37

Professing members: 2 118

Active Clergy: 24

The roots of Methodism, to which the United Methodist Church of Poland maintains its basis of faith, were expressed in the religious movement and reformation of the Anglican Church in the 18th century England. Two Anglican ministers, John Wesley and his brother Charles, were the main leaders.

Following World War I, Methodist congregations were formed in various places in Poland thanks to the missionary and humanitarian activities of the US-based "Methodist Episcopal Church, South", and in 1921 the Methodist Church in Poland was officially founded. It was run by Americans until the beginning of World War II. Since 1940 the local Methodists took over responsibility, and guided the church through the following decades.

During World War II, about one third of the church's congregations were lost through the incorporation of their territory into the Soviet Union. After the war, however, the church gained a new field of work through the incorporation of part of the former East Prussia. Congregations were organized in twenty of the many parishes of the United Evangelical Church, from which the ministers had fled west to Germany.

In 1945 the church received legal recognition. This event was followed by the period of Communist rule, during which it was difficult to carry on the church work. Various Methodist buildings were confiscated by the Polish government, social institutions such as homes for children and the elderly were closed.

On the 30th of June, 1995, the Polish Parliament supported by the Polish Senate and the President of the Polish Republic issued an official act of regulation between the state and the church. This gives the United Methodist Church of Poland the right to be one of the officially recognised churches in Poland.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN POLAND

Today, great importance is placed upon ministries with children, youth, and women. At various places social service ministries have been established. The theological seminary contributes to the education of the leaders of these ministries.

The United Methodist Church in Poland is a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council, the United Methodist Church and the Conference of European Churches.

PORTUGAL

PORTUGAL

Evangelical Methodist Church in Portugal

Igreja Evangélica Metodista
Portuguesa

Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal

Igreja Evangélica Presbiteriana
de Portugal

Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church

Igreja Lusitana Católica
Apostólica Evangélica

Population:

10 329 506
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

93%

EVANGELICAL METHODIST CHURCH IN PORTUGAL

Igreja Evangélica Metodista Portuguesa

Congregations: 14

Membership: 2 000

Ministers: 8

The origin of the Methodist Church in Portugal arose from the witness of two English laymen, Thomas Chegwin in 1854 and James Cassels ten years later, who were responsible for initiating small groups for prayer and Bible study following the pattern established by John Wesley and his class system.

In 1868 Portugal's first Methodist Church was built in Vila Nova de Gaia. The growth of Methodism under the leadership of Cassels was clearly evident, and persistent appeals were made to the Methodist Missionary Society in London for a missionary to assist his work. The request was eventually granted and a young minister, Robert Hawkey Moreton, was sent in 1871.

Within a few years the Methodist Church was building the Mirante Methodist Church, its first place of worship in Porto, and launching its great educational crusade against a high rate of illiteracy by opening primary schools. Meanwhile the future spiritual leaders of the church were emerging.

Between 1920 and 1940 the Portuguese Evangelical Methodist Church experienced its most fruitful period of expansion, recruiting members from all social classes, increasing the number of its schools.

There was an isolation created by the World War II and a lack of continuity of leadership. But later the number of ministers increased and the church became involved in the ecumenical movement.

Portuguese Methodism continued to be an overseas district of the British Methodist Conference and was dependent on ministers sent from England.

In 1985 the Synod, meeting in Aveiro, took the decision to proceed towards autonomy. Full autonomy was granted in June 1996 by the

EVANGELICAL METHODIST CHURCH IN PORTUGAL

Conference in Blackpool, and officially transferred on October 26, 1996, in Porto. The Portuguese Methodist Church is now fully autonomous.

The work is centred in Porto and covers mainly the northern half of the country.

The church is committed to social action.

There is increased ecumenical cooperation with the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches through the Portuguese Council of Churches, which shares in several areas of ecumenical life.

The Portuguese Methodist Church is a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council and the Conference of European Churches.

EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PORTUGAL

Igreja Evangélica Presbiteriana de Portugal

Presbyteries: 4

Congregations: 25

Membership: 3 000

Pastors: 12

The Presbyterian Church of Portugal was set up in 1952, but it can trace its history back to 1838 when Robert Kelley, a physician and missionary from Scotland, opened a small hospital and a school, and began to preach the gospel on the Portuguese island of Madeira. There, in the town of Funchal, the first Presbyterian community in Portugal was founded in 1845. Soon, persecution began. Local opposition led to the burning down of the doctor's home and the dispersal of the mission; many Portuguese Protestants emigrated and found refuge in Brazil, Trinidad and the United States. Some of them returned later to Portugal, and in 1871 the first Presbyterian Church in Lisbon was founded. Slowly the Presbyterian work expanded. It received substantial help from the Presbyterian churches of the USA. In 1926 a Presbytery was formed.

In 1947 the statutes for an Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal were adopted, and in 1952 the first synod was held, on Reformation day. The synod met in Lisbon and was attended by representatives from every Presbyterian community in the country.

While it is the oldest Protestant church in the country, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal is one of the smallest in number.

The church is involved in ecumenical dialogue, theological formation and in social projects.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal has close contacts at national level with the Methodist and the Lusitanian (Anglican) churches and internationally with the Spanish Evangelical Church, the Reformed Church in France, the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Churches in Angola, Mozambique and East Timor.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal is a member of the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the

EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PORTUGAL

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

LUSITANIAN CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Igreja Lusitana Católica Apostólica Evangélica

Dioceses-archdioceses: 2

Congregations: 16

Membership: 5 000 (Communicants: 1 500)

Canonically active priests: 8

Missionary priest: 1

The Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church in Portugal is a member church of the Anglican Communion. Like all Anglican Communion churches, it recognizes the spiritual leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury. In addition, the church is an extra-provincial diocese under the metropolitical authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Lusitanian Church functions as a single Diocese divided into two Archdeaconries, the South (at Lisbon, with 6 places of worship) and the North (at Oporto, with 10 places of worship). Most of the 16 congregations cluster around these two major cities.

In fact, the historical origin of the Lusitanian Church, in the 19th century, is a consequence of the Portuguese reaction to the dogmas of the Pope's: universal jurisdiction and infallibility; the religious hierarchy defending the Pope's absolutism on the spiritual as well as on the temporal level; the marginalisation of those suffering under the influence of the liberalism; the Marian proclamations of that time; and also the Old Catholic movement which was felt in Portugal. On the other hand, after the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in 1834, a certain amount of religious freedom was granted in Portugal. In consequence two Anglican Priests came to Lisbon, the first was Gomes y Togar, a former Spanish priest who came from Church of England in 1839 and opened a chapel at the centre of the city. It was closed in 1870. The second was a Spanish priest, Angel Herreros de Mora who came from Episcopal Church of the USA in 1868. He started a congregation along the lines of the Episcopal Church. This congregation acquired official status under the name of Igreja Evangelica Espanhola. Services were conducted according to the American version of the Book of Common Prayer of 1789.

LUSITANIAN CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC EVANGELICAL CHURCH

At a Synod in 1880 on March 8, presided by Bishop Riley of the American Episcopal Church, a constitution was approved in accordance with the doctrinal and liturgical traditions of the Anglican Communion saying: “we do not desire to found a new religion, but simply to cleanse the Christian Religion from the corruption of the ages, and to reconquer the ancient liberties of the early Lusitanian Church - so long subjected to the foreign yoke of Rome - and to spread through all this country a doctrine, which shall be Catholic and Apostolic, in a church that shall be Portuguese not Roman”. In the same year a second non-Roman Catholic community in Gaia, near Oporto, was admitted.

In 1951, yet another group of independent Evangelical churches joined the Lusitanian Church. In 1961 the American Episcopal Church established a Concordat of Full Communion with the Lusitanian Church, under the terms of the “Bonn Agreement”. The same occurred in 1963 with the Church of Ireland and the Church of England.

And later, in 1965 the Bishops of the Union of Utrecht (Old Catholic Communion) established a similar concordat with the Church, on the lines of the “Bonn Agreement”.

In July, 1980, the Lusitanian Church was formally integrated into the Anglican Communion under the status of an extra-provincial Diocese under the metropolitan authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury in his capacity as the focal point of unity of the Anglican Communion throughout the world.

In 1998 the Church, through its Diocesan Synod, approved the Porvoo Declaration and took the decision of making a request of being integrated in the Porvoo Communion expressing as well its willingness to establish co-operation, with interchangeable ministries, with the congregations of other Porvoo churches. It was accepted and since its integration in the Porvoo process a representative of the Lusitanian Church has been taking part in the Porvoo Contact Group meetings.

The Church was named Lusitanian, Catholic, Apostolic, Evangelical in which the word LUSITANIAN, referring to Lusitania, a Roman Province situated in the territory which, in part, was to constitute the Portuguese

LUSITANIAN CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC EVANGELICAL CHURCH

kingdom, was selected to signify that the purpose of the new community was to restore the ancient Christianity and maintain the faith of the Primitive Church; the word CATHOLIC avoided the idea that the community might belong to the specifically Protestant world; the word APOSTOLIC was to emphasize her loyalty to the apostolic succession; and the word EVANGELICAL declared the aim to proclaim Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, in contrast with a supposedly dead ritualism and Marian devotion of the dominating religion.

The Lusitanian Church is one of the three founding churches of the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches (COPIC). It regularly takes part in the Ecumenical and Inter-confessional Meetings in Portugal involving the Roman Catholic Church, COPIC and the Portuguese Evangelic Alliance. The Lusitanian Church is also a member of the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

ROMANIA

ROMANIA

Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania

Biserica Evanghelică C.A.
din Romania

Evangelische Kirche A.B.
in Rumänien

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania

Romániai Evangélikus
Lutheránus Egyház

Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche
in Rumänien

Reformed Church in Romania

Biserica Reformată din România
Királyhágómelléki Református
Egyházkerület

Romanian Orthodox Church

Biserica Ortodoxă Română

Population:

19 679 306
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

94%

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN ROMANIA

Biserica Evanghelica C.A. din Romania
Evangelische Kirche A.B. in Rumänien

Congregations: 254

Membership: 14 543

Pastors: 44

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania is the Church of the German Lutheran minority in the country, mostly in Transylvania. Its historical roots go back to the 12th century, when German-speaking settlers arrived in the area (then Hungary). As a community, they had already, before the Reformation, had their own political and ecclesiastical rights. The Reformation arrived in the cities as early as 1520, and was officially introduced in all the towns and villages in 1550, with the adoption of the Augsburg Confession (German: Augsburgser Bekenntnis, Latin: Confessio Augustana). The office of bishop was introduced and has continued without interruption.

The 20th century was for the Church a time marked by deep and sharp crises. After the transfer of Transylvania to Romania (1919) came the worldwide economic collapse and the impact of Nazism, which provoked resistance, also in the Church. The end of World War II brought with it fresh struggles, through expropriation, and deportation of the Germans into forced labour. The Church school system and the diaconal institutions were dismantled. Yet the Church was able to survive in the new situation. International ecumenical contacts were crucial during this period.

The synodical-Presbyterian church constitution of 1861 granted a prominent role to the laity and to the congregations, and was revised for the first time in the mid-1970s.

There is a Department for Protestant Theology at the “Lucian Blaga” University in Sibiu (where no fewer than six languages are offered, i.e. Romanian, German, English, Latin, Greek and Hebrew).

The Church maintains close relations with Lutheran Churches in Germany.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN ROMANIA

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ROMANIA

Romániai Evangélikus Lutheránus Egyház Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Rumänien

Dioceses: 1

Congregations: 39

Membership: 33 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 45

The Lutheran confession appeared in Transylvania in the 15-16th centuries. Most congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania have a 450 year old history. These congregations belonged to the German-speaking Evangelical Lutheran Church in Transylvania, even though they were Hungarian-speaking, until 1896 when they founded a diocese. Until World War I the diocese was part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary. When after the war Transylvania became part of Romania, the Hungarian-speaking congregations were cut off from the motherland and decided to become a separate Church, at the Synod in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca) in 1921. The final decision was taken and legalised in 1922. The Romanian government accepted the new Superintendentia (diocese) in 1926. Four languages are used in the church: Hungarian, Slovak, German and Romanian.

Some congregations are growing, and new facilities are developing in their work. Activities of diakonia are expanding in all the congregations. People who lost their connections with the church during communism are coming back. Also those who migrated from villages to the urban centres are joining the congregations in the cities. The church has founded the Evangelical Youth Association in Romania. There are different kinds of youth programmes. Women are involved in different administrative and diaconical activities. The pastoral ministry is open to women since 1940.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania has relationships with Lutheran Churches and institutions in Hungary, Germany, Denmark, Finland and Norway.

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ROMANIA

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe: Leuenberg Church Fellowship, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

REFORMED CHURCH IN ROMANIA

Biserica Reformată din România Királyhágómelléki Református Egyházkerület

Districts: 2

Congregations: 785

Membership: 560 000

Bishops: 2

Pastors: 788

The Kiralyhagomellek District and Transylvanian District make up the Reformed Church in Romania. Both districts are members of the Conference of European Churches

The Reformed Church in Romania is the organization of the Calvinist Church in Romania. Hungarian is the main church language. Members of the church (the majority of Hungarian ethnicity) are scattered over the whole of Romania, but the majority are in Transylvania. The history of the church is closely connected to that of the Reformed Church in Hungary. The organized reformation of the Church in Transylvania started after the fall of the united Hungarian Kingdom as a result of the Battle of Mohács (1526). The Synod of Nagyenyed in 1564 is considered the official foundation of the Reformed Church in Transylvania. The first translation of the Bible was made by Karolyi Gaspar in 1590.

At the beginning of the 17th century, Transylvania was recognized as a self-governing principality and the eastern part of Hungary was annexed to it. This history explains why the Reformed Church in Romania is composed of two self-governing districts: 1) Transylvania, with Cluj as the centre, and 2) Királyhágómellék (Partium) around Oradea. During the 17th century the Reformed Church in Transylvania flourished. Important institutions were established, such as the theological academy and the Reformed college.

The synodical-Presbyterian order was introduced in the second half of the 19th century. A new church constitution was introduced in 1948. The communist takeover in Romania in 1948 brought a time of

REFORMED CHURCH IN ROMANIA

harsh persecution. All the institutions were nationalized and church life was limited. Many pastors were imprisoned. The authorities totally controlled the religious life. This came to an end with the Romanian revolution of 1989, in which the Reformed congregation of Timisoara played a significant role. Since 1989 the Reformed Church in Romania has greatly developed its pastoral ministry, evangelism and religious education.

The two districts, the Transylvanian Reformed Church District and the Királyhágómellék Reformed Church District have each a bishop at their head who take turns to preside over the Synod for a period of one year.

The church has close relationships with the other historical Hungarian-speaking churches in the country, as well as with the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Hungarian Reformed Churches in other parts of Europe and in North America. It is ecumenically engaged with the Romanian Orthodox Church and other Churches in Romania.

The Reformed Church in Romania is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Biserica Ortodoxă Română

Metropolitanates: 6

Archdioceses: 16

Dioceses: 13

Parishes: 15 717

Membership: 18 806 428

Bishops: 53

Priests: 15 068

The Romanian Orthodox Church is unique among the Orthodox Churches because it alone exists within a Latin culture. The Church has apostolic roots. St Andrew preached on the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea, later on called Dobrudgea, known from the antique sources as “Scythia Minor”. Many Christians in Scythia Minor died a martyr’s death during the persecutions under the Roman emperor Diocletian. Afterward Latin and Byzantine missionaries had been active in the area. By the time the Romanian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia emerged as political entities in the 14th century, metropolitan seats were established in the capitals of both countries and Romanian ethnic identity was already closely identified with the Orthodox Christian faith.

In 1359, the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognised officially the Metropolitanate of Ungro-Wallachia or Wallachia, with the see in Arges and its hierarch Iachint, who had been metropolitan of Vicina, in the north of Dobrudgea until then. The Metropolitanate was moved, in 1517, to Targoviste, and in 1688 to Bucharest, where it has remains to this day. From 1370 - 1401, the new Metropolitanate of Severin functioned in the territory on the right side of the Olt River. At the beginning of 16th century, the Dioceses of Ramnic and of Buzau were set up, which are still functioning today. From 1793-1949, a Diocese of Arges functioned and was reactivated in 1990.

The Metropolitanate of Moldova was first mentioned in 1386. It was only on 26 July 1401 that the Moldavian Iosif - ordained at Halici, and related

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

to the ruler of the country - was recognised as metropolitan. The seat of the Metropolitanate was in Suceava, while in the second half of the 17th century it was moved to Iasi.

Following the independence of Romania in 1877, the Orthodox Church in Romania was granted autocephaly in 1885 by the Ecumenical Patriarch. The union of Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina with the old Romania, by which the Romanian unitary state was created, brought about a series of changes in the life of the church. After 1918, especially in Transylvania, the State took over many of the attributions of the church (for example, in the field of education), so that its role was limited mainly to spiritual issues. In 1925 the Holy Synod decided to elevate the Romanian Orthodox Church to the rank of Patriarchate and to raise the metropolitan primate to that of patriarch.

The Holy Synod is the highest authority of the Romanian Orthodox Church. It is made up of the hierarchs in function (metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, assistant bishops). The standing synod functions between the sessions of the Holy Synod; it includes the patriarch, the metropolitans in function and the secretary of the Holy Synod. The representative central body of the Romanian Orthodox Church for all administrative issues as well as for matters that are not dealt with by the holy synod is the church national assembly, formed by the holy synod members and three representatives of each diocese or archdiocese (a clergy and two lay persons), appointed by the respective diocesan assemblies. The supreme administrative body, both of the Holy Synod and of the church national assembly is the church national council, composed of three clergy and six lay persons elected by the church national assembly, as well as of the administrative counsellors as permanent members. His Beatitude the Patriarch is the president of these bodies of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The Romanian Patriarchate is made up of six metropolitan sees with 16 archdioceses and 13 dioceses in the country, and three metropolitan sees outside Romania (Bessarabia, Central and Northern Europe, Western and Southern Europe), one archdiocese (USA and Canada) and two dioceses (Hungary and Serbia-Montenegro).

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The church has 38 theological seminaries, 19 schools of religious singers, and 11 faculties of theology. Thousands of students are registered in these institutions. More than 10,000 teachers teach religion in the public schools.

The head of the church is the Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, Patriarch of Romania and Vicar of Caesarea of Cappadocia.

The Romanian Orthodox Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

RUSSIA

Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia

Евангелическо-Лютеранская Церковь Ингрии на территории России
Inkerin evankelis-luterilainen kirkko

Russian Orthodox Church
(suspended its membership in the Conference of European Churches in 2008)

Русская Православная Церковь

Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia

Российский Союз Евангельских христиан-баптистов

Population:

146 877 088
(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

58%

EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHURCH OF INGRIA IN RUSSIA

Евангелическо-Лютеранская Церковь Ингрии на территории России
Inkerin evankelis-luterilainen kirkko

Deaneries: 7

Congregations: 75

Membership: 18 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 110

The first Lutheran congregation in Ingria was founded in 1611. At the time when the Lutheran faith established its roots in Scandinavia and Finland, it became a major religion south and east of the Gulf of Finland. As early as 1655, there were 58 parishes, 36 churches and 42 pastors.

The region of Ingria was once inhabited by Votes and Karelians known as Ingrians, both ethnically related to Finns. The region was also inhabited by Finnish peasants after Sweden conquered the area in the 17th century.

Before the Russian revolution of 1917, there were 32 Ingrian parishes in St Petersburg and the surrounding area from the Estonian border to the Finnish one. The total number of parishioners at that time was 147,000. During the post-revolutionary period the church development was handicapped and for many years the church was forced into a shadowy existence. Many Ingrians experienced enormous persecution. Still, members continued to meet secretly.

During the 1950s, many surviving Ingrians gradually returned home. In the 1970's two congregations were established under the administration of the Lutheran Church of Estonia. In 1992 the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria was separated from the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church and attained official state registration. The first Synod of the church was convened in 1993.

Nowadays parishes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria are located all over the country, both on the historical territory of Ingria, and also in the region of Povolzie, Siberia, at Urals, including the central regions of the country.

EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHURCH OF INGRIA IN RUSSIA

The future ministers of the church study and obtain their knowledge in the Theological Institute of the Church of Ingria.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria follows the Nordic Lutheran tradition, though being more conservative. The church body is headed by the bishop. To support congregations in the church body special committees were formed responsible for the work with children and youth, spiritual education and information sharing to support church life.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria is the second largest Lutheran Church in Russia, mostly active in Ingria and Karelia.

The church has close relations with the Russian Orthodox Church and other Protestant Churches of the Russian Federation. There is a collaboration between the Church of Ingria and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, the International Lutheran Council and the Conference of European Churches.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Русская Православная Церковь

Under the Jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church are:

Orthodox Church of Japan (3 Dioceses)
Orthodox Church of Ukraine (1 Metropolitanate with 16 Subdioceses + 52 Dioceses)
Orthodox Church of Moldova (6 Dioceses)
Orthodox Church of Lithuania (2 Dioceses)
Orthodox Church of Estonia (2 Dioceses)
Exarchate of Belarus (15 Dioceses)
Metropolitanate of Kazakhstan (9 Dioceses)
Metropolitanate of Middle Asia (3 Dioceses)
Remaining countries (10 Dioceses)

In Russia:

Patriarchal Region: 1 (with several Subdioceses)
Metropolitanates: 56 (with several Subdioceses)
Dioceses: 20
Parishes: 34 764
Membership: 164 100 000
Bishops: 368
Priests: 35 171

The Russian Orthodox Church suspended its membership in the Conference of European Churches in 2008.

The Russian Orthodox Church is a multi-ethnic autocephalous church maintaining communion in prayer, faith, sacraments and canon law with other autocephalous Orthodox churches.

Christianity came to Southern Russia since the Apostolic era. But the mass baptism of the Russian people took place in 988 under Prince Vladimir of Kiev. That was when the Russian Church was established as metropolitanate, forming part of the Constantinople Patriarchate. Thus Byzantine Christianity became the faith of the three peoples who trace their origins to Rus' of Kiev: the Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians. Christian Kiev flourished for a time, but then entered a period

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

of decline that culminated in 1240 when the city was destroyed during the Mongol invasions. From the beginning the Slavonic language was used in worship and gradually Russian clergy replaced the Greek. In the beginning of the 14th century the metropolitan see was moved from Kiev to Moscow.

In 1448, the Russian Church was proclaimed autocephalous by the Moscow Council of Russian bishops, and was recognised by the Constantinople Patriarchate and other Eastern patriarchates in 1589. The Russian Church got patriarchate status and was the fifth in the Orthodox Church diptych, after the Jerusalem patriarchate.

In 1700, the patriarchal system was abolished by Peter the Great (1676-1725). The church leadership became synodical, and the tsar himself became the head of the church. The church came under the close State supervision. During this period, especially in the 19th century, a great revival of Russian Orthodox theology, spirituality, and monasticism took place.

In November 1917, the All-Russian Church Synod restored its patriarchal seat in Moscow.

In early February 1918, the then government of Russia enacted the Decree on separation of church from state and school from church that proclaimed separation of church and State in Russia, freedom to “profess any religion or profess none”, and deprived religious organizations the right to own any property and legal status. The years that followed brought with it hard times for the church with World War II and the years that followed it.

In the late 1980s the new political and social freedoms resulted in many church buildings being returned to the church, to being restored by local parishioners. A pivotal point in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church came in 1988, the thousandth anniversary of Russians’ baptism. Metropolitan Alexy of Leningrad, ascended the patriarchal throne in 1990 and presided over the partial return of Orthodox Christianity to Russian society after years of uncertainty and difficulty. Some 15,000 churches were re-opened or built by the end of his tenure, and the

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

process of recovery and rebuilding has continued under his successor Patriarch Kirill.

The supreme governing bodies of the Russian Orthodox Church are the local council, the bishops' council and the Holy Synod chaired by the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. The patriarch is elected for life. The local council consists of the bishops and representatives of the clergy, monks and laity. It interprets the teaching of the Orthodox Church, preserving the doctrinal and canonical unity with the local Orthodox churches. It also deals with internal matters of church life, canonizes saints, elects the patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and establishes the procedure of such elections. The bishops' council consists of the diocesan bishops and the vicar bishops and meets once every 4 years. The Holy Synod, chaired by the patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, is the governing body of the Russian Orthodox Church between bishops' councils. Besides the patriarch, the Holy Synod consists of 12 members - seven permanent (most senior metropolitans) and five temporary, chosen from diocesan bishops.

The Russian Orthodox Church has five theological academies, 32 seminaries, 43 pre-seminaries, one theological institute, two Orthodox universities, six pastoral training courses, two diocesan theological schools for women etc.

The Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

UNION OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS-BAPTISTS OF RUSSIA

Российский Союз Евангельских христиан-баптистов

Districts: 7

Churches: 1 818

Membership: 76 070

The Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia, formerly All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, was formed in the Soviet Union in 1944 by uniting the Union of Evangelical Christians and the Russian Baptist Union. The Baptists in Russia grew from religious revival movements that began in the 1860-1870s. In Ukraine, groups of Russians influenced by German Mennonite settlers gathered for Bible study and eventually adopted Baptist beliefs. In Georgia, German Baptists developed a Baptist community. These two movements united in 1884 as the Russian Baptist Union. The Union of Evangelical Christians was formed in 1908.

Baptists increased in Russia despite early persecution by the government, but by 1905 persecution lessened. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, religious freedom was declared for all, and Baptists increased rapidly. In 1929 began a period of religious suppression, but during and after World War II the government made some concessions to the churches. Baptist educational and social activities were nevertheless restricted. However, the changes from about 1990 brought greater freedom for the Union of Evangelical Christian Baptists.

The Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia is multi-ethnic, consisting of Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Germans, Latvians, Armenians, Georgians, Ossets, Moldavians, Chuvashes, Komi, and other nationalities.

It has the following structure: local churches and groups form regional associations of churches that form the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia. All associations are divided into 7 territorial districts (Okroug): 1) Central, 2) Southern, 3) North-Western, 4) Siberia, 5) Far Eastern, 6) Ural, 7) Povolzhye. These are led by regional vice-presidents.

UNION OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS-BAPTISTS OF RUSSIA

The supreme governing body is the All-Russian Congress of representatives of regional associations. Delegates of the Congress are elected by religious associations at pre-Congress meetings. The Congress is convened once every four years. The Congress is authorized to take decisions on any issue of the Union's activities, including the determination of the main activities of the Union, the adoption and modification of the doctrine of Evangelical Christian Baptists, as well as the election of the president of the Union and his deputies.

In the period between the Congresses, the governing body is the Council of the Union, consisting of the heads of the regional associations of churches, the president of the Union and his deputies. The Council of the Union is convened as necessary, but at least twice a year.

The current activities of the Union are managed by the president of the Union, who is elected by the Congress as nominated by the Council of the Union for a period of four years and not more than for two consecutive terms.

SERBIA

Reformed Christian Church in Serbia

Szerbiai Református
Keresztyén Egyház

Serbian Orthodox Church

Српске Православне Цркве

Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia

Slovenská evanjelická a.v. cirkev
v Srbsku

Словачка Евангеличка А.В.
Црква у Србији

United Methodist Church in Serbia

Евангеличка методистичка
црква у Републици Србији

Population:

8 790 574
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

79%

REFORMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN SERBIA

Szerbiai Református Keresztyén Egyház

Congregations: 48

Membership: 17 000

Pastors: 19

The Reformed Christian Church in Serbia and Montenegro used to be part of the Reformed Church in Hungary, from the time of the Reformation until 1920. By the Treaty of Trianon (1920), Hungary was split up and lost large parts of its territory to the surrounding newly formed states. Some three million Hungarians were forced to live as minorities in ex-Yugoslavia, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Ukraine. Like in the other countries, the Reformed Hungarians in Vojvodina, the northern part of Serbia, had no other choice than to organize their own church, the Reformed Christian Church in Yugoslavia (1933). After the wars in the 1990s and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the name of the church eventually became the Reformed Christian Church in Serbia and Montenegro.

The church has kept the same confessions as the Reformed Church in Hungary, the Second Helvetic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. The church is scattered. The pastors travel continuously to visit several small congregations under their care. Among the priorities of the church are children and mission to young people. The church has good ecumenical relations with the other WCC member churches in the country.

The Reformed Christian Church in Serbia and Montenegro is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Српске Православне Цркве

Dioceses: 39 (plus 7 dioceses of Archbishopric of Ohrid and Skopje)

Parishes: 3 100

Membership: 8 000 000

Bishops: 47

The Serbian Orthodox Church is the second oldest Slavic Orthodox Church in the world (after the Bulgarian Orthodox Church). It is located primarily in Serbia and Montenegro and in the other republics of ex-Yugoslavia.

The origins of Christianity in Serbia are obscure. It is known that Latin missionaries were active along the Dalmatian coast in the 7th century, and that by the 9th century Byzantine missionaries were at work in Serbia, having been sent by Emperor Basil I the Macedonian. Eventually the Serbian people became entirely Christian. Due in part to its geographical location, the Serbian Church vacillated between Rome and Constantinople for a time, but finally gravitated towards the Byzantines. In 1219, St Sava was consecrated the first Archbishop of a self-governing Serbian Orthodox Church by the Patriarch of Constantinople, then residing in Nicaea during the Latin occupation of his city. In 1253 the see was transferred to the Monastery of Peć by Archbishop Arsenije. The status of the Serbian Orthodox Church grew along with the expansion and heightened prestige of the Serbian kingdom. After King Stefan Dušan assumed the imperial title of tsar, the Serbian Archbishopric was correspondingly raised to the rank of Patriarchate in 1346.

The greatest flourishing of the Serbian Church occurred during the period before the arrival of the Turks. The Serbians were defeated by the Turks in 1389, and subsequently they were gradually integrated into the Ottoman Empire. With the final Turkish conquest in 1459, the greater portion of Serbian lands became a Turkish *pasalik* (province). After the death of Patriarch Arsenije II in 1463 no successor was elected. The Turks suppressed the Serbian Patriarchate and it was restored in 1557. But it was suppressed again in 1766, when all the bishops in Serbia were

SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

replaced by Greeks subject to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Many Serbs with their hierarchs migrated to southern Hungary where the church was granted autonomy. The seat of the archbishop was moved from Pec to Karlovci.

The emergence of an autonomous Serbian state in 1830 was coupled with the granting of inner autonomy by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to the Serbian Church in 1831 and the replacement of Greek bishops by Serbs. In 1878 Serbia gained international recognition as an independent nation, and in 1879 the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognised the Serbian Church as autocephalous.

After the First World War all Serbs were united under one ecclesiastical authority. In 1920 the Serbian Orthodox Church was elevated to the rank of Patriarchate. The full patriarchal title became Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and Serbian Patriarch.

The Serbian Church suffered heavily during World War II, especially in regions under fascist control. Altogether it lost some 25 percent of its churches and monasteries and about one-fifth of its clergy. About 1.7 million Orthodox Christians lost their lives. Following the establishment of a communist Yugoslav government in 1945, the Serbian Church had to work out a new relationship with the officially atheist state.

Tragically, the civil war in ex-Yugoslavia also brought again immense sufferings. Approximately 10,000 Serbs were killed and over a million became refugees. More than 700 churches and sacred places were entirely destroyed or damaged. Following the bombings in 1999 the Serbian Orthodox Church faced a new exodus from Kosovo and Metochia, the ancestral spiritual birthplace of the church and immense suffering. There were lives and homes lost, families broken and about 150 churches, monasteries and sacred places destroyed.

The supreme authority of the Serbian Church is the Holy Assembly of bishops, composed of all bishops, which meets twice a year. A five-member standing synod of bishops administers the day-to-day affairs. The Serbian Orthodox Church maintains three theological faculties and seven theological seminaries, all residential institutions where students

SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

live and study together. Under the patronage of the Holy Assembly of bishops two organizations have been established: Philanthropy, the Serbian Church Aid; and Dobrocinstvo, the pilgrimage organization. The church celebrates its feasts according to the old (Julian) calendar.

The head of the church is Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and Serbian Patriarch.

The autonomous Archbishopric of Ohrid and Skopje is a part of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The Serbian Orthodox Church is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

SLOVAK EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN SERBIA

Slovenská evanjelická a.v. cirkev v Srbsku
Словачка Евангеличка А.В. Црква у Србији

Congregations: 27

Membership: 50 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 30

The Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia is the largest Lutheran Church in former Yugoslavia, speaking the Slovak language. Each congregation is governed by a local council, and the entire Church by a synod. The bishop is the spiritual head. Its largely rural membership is located in the autonomous province of Vojvodina of Serbian Republic on the plains south of the Hungarian border.

Earlier the Church was a part of the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church in Hungary, but upon the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918 it became an independent Church, with headquarters in Novi Sad. Its pastors are educated at the Lutheran Theological Faculty in Bratislava, along with those of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Republic of Slovakia. Between the World Wars, it was a part of the German Lutheran Church in Yugoslavia, but after 1945 it became an independent Church.

In 1967 this Yugoslav Church body was joined by the 7,000-member Evangelical Church in the People's Republic of Serbia, composed of Hungarian Lutherans.

A Slovak translation of the Bible, completed in the 1970s in Czechoslovakia, is widely used. Close links continue to be maintained with the much larger counterpart and namesake of the Church in the Republic of Slovakia.

The Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN SERBIA

Евангеличка методистичка црква у Републици Србији

Congregations: 14

Professing members: 472

Active Clergy: 12

The United Methodist Church's work in the Vojvodina region (the northern part of the Republic of Serbia) was begun by German missionaries. The first Methodist worship service was held in this region in 1898. Soon, the entire region was affected by a great awakening, and thriving new congregations were born (until 1904 exclusively among the German-speaking population, later among Hungarian speakers as well). But beginning in 1944, as a result of developments in the Second World War, the "Donauschwaben" or "Danube Swabians" were forced to leave the country or died in concentration camps. Since most pastors and members of the Methodist Church were members of this ethnic group, many churches were closed. It was a painful juncture in the Church's history.

However, the work of the Methodists in Serbia continued, albeit under more difficult conditions. The charitable and educational work was no longer allowed. Yet new congregations were founded among the Slovak, Hungarian, and Serbo-Croat speaking minorities. Under the pressure of the political situation at the time, several congregations of the "Blue Cross" also joined the Methodist Church in the 1950s. Waves of emigration later led to the loss of significant numbers of members.

The United Methodist Church in Serbia is caring for ethnic minorities, as in the evangelizing and social services for the Roma. A varied children's and youth ministry, Christian outreach programs, local and regional activities, as well as support for people in need are some of the priorities of the local churches.

The United Methodist Church congregations of Serbia and North Macedonia form one organizational unit (Annual Conference) with two districts.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN SERBIA

The United Methodist Church in Serbia is a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council, the United Methodist Church and the Conference of European Churches.

SLOVAKIA

Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia

Evanjelická cirkev A.V. na Slovensku

Evangelische Kirche A.B. in der Slowakischen Republik

Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovakia (see page 55)

Pravoslávna cirkev v českých krajinách a na Slovensku

Pravoslavná církev v českých zemích a na Slovensku

Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia

Szlovákiai Református Keresztyén Egyház

Reformovaná kresťanská cirkev na Slovensku

Population:

5 443 120
(January 1, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

93%

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN SLOVAKIA

Evanjelická cirkev A.V. na Slovensku
Evangelische Kirche A.B. in der Slowakischen Republik

Districts: 2

Seniorats: 14

Congregations: 323

Membership: 316 250

Bishops: 3

Pastors: 363

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia emerged from the 16th century Reformation. The evangelisation of the people was carried on by the Slavic apostles Cyril and Methodius from Saloniki from 863 onwards. Reforming efforts in Slovakia were supported by the Hussites. They prepared the soil for Luther's Reformation. The Counter-Reformation struck heavily and caused many losses. 888 churches were confiscated. Many pastors were persecuted and killed. In 1610 an independent Evangelical religious organization was established in Zilina.

Between the years 1670-1680, the Evangelical Church had difficulties to function under the monarchy. The Edict of Toleration in 1781 ensured freedom of confession for non-Catholic believers and contributed to the development of the church. Equality between confessions was legally obtained only in 1848. Within a few years a hundred new churches were built.

Until the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, Slovak Lutherans had been part of the Evangelical Church in the Kingdom of Hungary. The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia was founded and its constitution adopted in 1921-1922. In the period of 1918 to 1938, the church developed and was actively involved in the society. In 1948, the church lost its schools and diaconal services. Church periodicals ceased to be published. Many clergy were persecuted. Following 1989, the church gradually resumed its previous activities. A new constitution was adopted in 1993.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN SLOVAKIA

As early as the 1920s, women were admitted to the study of theology. By 1964 there were 15 ordained women.

The church is committed to Evangelical Diaconal work. The missionary activities of the church are fostered by the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession Centre for Evangelism Media and the Evangelical Media Programme. Theological formation is provided at the evangelical theological school of the Comenius University in Bratislava, and the Bible school in Martin offers education for non-ordained church co-workers.

Cooperation with the state has deepened. In 2002 the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, together with ten other registered churches, signed a basic agreement with the state, on the basis of which two partial agreements concerning religious education and ministry in the armed forces were signed.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession is the second largest church in Slovakia. The church is organized in congregations, seniorats and districts. The highest legislative and administrative body is the Synod Assembly which meets annually. The highest administrative authority between Synod Assemblies is the General Presbyterium. The fundamental law of the church is the Constitution.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches and the Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Slovak Republic.

REFORMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN SLOVAKIA

Szlovákiai Református Keresztyén Egyház Reformovaná kresťanská cirkev na Slovensku

Presbyteries: 10

Congregations: 327

Membership: 120 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 207

The Reformation movement reached the region in the early 1520s. First Lutheranism, but later Calvinism dominated. In 1564 four presbyteries were formed in Eastern Slovakia where Slovaks and Hungarians lived side by side.

Until 1918 the Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia was part of the Reformed Church in Hungary, which was already firmly established in 1567.

The Counter-Reformation of the 17th century, backed by the military might of the Habsburgs, brought severe measures against the Reformed congregations and lasted until the end of the 18th century. The Patent of Toleration (German: Toleranzpatent) in 1781 and the Edict of Toleration (German: Toleranzedikt) in 1782 issued by the Habsburg Emperor Joseph II (1741-1790) granted religious freedom and recognized the existence of non-Catholics in the Habsburg Empire.

The Reformed Church has always been a minority church. By the Treaty of Trianon (1920), part of the Hungarian territory was allocated to the newly created Czechoslovak Republic. About 245,000 Christians, constituting the Reformed Christian Church of Slovakia, were living in that area, which also included Sub-Carpathia. Following World War II, Sub-Carpathia was assigned to the Soviet Union (Ukraine). As a result of this partition and of the forced expulsion of the Hungarian minority from Slovakia in 1946-1947, the membership of the church decreased to about 115,000.

The Synod of Buda (1791) opened the way for the Presbyterian-synodical constitution. The Synod of Debrecen (1881) gave a unified

REFORMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN SLOVAKIA

structure to the Reformed Church of Hungary. The Reformed Church of Slovakia was established in its present form after World War I. In 1923 a General Synod was convened in Levice to adopt the constitution. The relationship between Slovaks and the Hungarian minority proved to be difficult. Some Hungarians did not recognize the results of Trianon Treaty and refused to accept the new constitution. In 1951 the Reformed Church of Slovakia adopted a new constitution. The supreme organ was the Synod, with a Synodical Council as its executive arm. Seven presbyteries were created. A Theological Institute was opened in Komarno (1995).

Today the church is organized into nine classes/presbyteries, seven Hungarian and two Slovakian. The bishop is the head of the church, in contrast with other Reformed Churches. More than 87 percent of the members are Hungarian-speaking, the others speak Slovak.

The Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

SLOVENIA

Population:

2 079 976
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

54%

**Evangelical Church of the
Augsburg Confession in the
Republic of Slovenia**

Evangeličanska cerkev A.V.
v Republiki Sloveniji

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Evangeličanska cerkev A.V. v Republiki Sloveniji

Congregations: 14

Membership: 18 000

Bishop: 1

The beginnings of the Protestant Church movement in Slovenia go back to the 16th century, when the Slovene representatives of the Reformation movement laid the foundation of the Slovene language and published the first printed books in the Slovene language (the Holy Bible, catechisms etc).

In the Counter-Reformation period the Protestant Church was suppressed. It was preserved only in two parishes (Surd and Nemesca) in the Eastern part of the country, which had been under Hungarian administration. After the issue of the Edict of Toleration, in the east of Slovenia (Prekmurje) the Protestant parishes were gradually re-established.

Today the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Republic of Slovenia is organized according to the Act issued in 1977. In public the church is represented by a Senior and a Superintendent, who form the church administration.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovenia is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the International Protestant Association, the Lutheran World Federation and the Conference of European Churches.

SPAIN

Population:

46 354 321
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

78%

Spanish Evangelical Church

Iglesia Evangelica Española

Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church

Iglesia Española Reformada
Episcopal

SPANISH EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Iglesia Evangelica Española

Presbyteries: 7

Congregations: 40

Membership: 2 700 active members; 11 000 influence members

The Spanish Evangelical Church is a united church which is made up of congregations coming from different Protestant traditions: Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregationalist and Lutheran. It was established in 1869 in the wake of the religious tolerance which emerged in Spain following the Revolution of 1868. Its first General Assembly was held in Seville in 1872, when it adopted the name Spanish Christian Church. In 1874 the title was changed to Spanish Evangelical Church. By virtue of the Law of Religious Liberty of 1980, the church obtained for the first time legal status and has now been recognized officially by the Spanish government.

The church is governed by the General Synod, which meets every two years and elects the Permanent Commission. It is formed by the pastors and representatives of the local communities.

The congregations are grouped in seven presbyteries. There are several departments, for Sunday School, for women's work, and the training of pastors and laity.

The Spanish Evangelical Church is a member of the Conference of Protestant Churches in Latin Countries of Europe, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Methodist Council, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

SPANISH REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Iglesia Española Reformada Episcopal

Deaneries: 3

Congregations: 20

Membership: 5 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 22

The Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church was formed in Gibraltar in 1868, during the first period of religious liberty, when Juan Bautista Cabrera, former Roman Catholic priest, joined other Catholic priests and Protestant pastors to reform the Church in Spain.

In 1880 at the synod held in Seville the church was organized and the Revd. Cabrera was elected the first bishop of the Spanish Church, but he was consecrated in 1894. During bishop Cabrera's Episcopate, the Spanish Church experienced a steady growth; at the time of his death in 1916 there were a good number of churches and parish schools. After the death of bishop Cabrera the church began to experience difficulties. It remained without a bishop for a time after Cabrera died and was placed under the authority of the Church of Ireland. During the Civil War of 1936-39 the church suffered greatly. The persecution lasted during most of General Franco's dictatorship. No formal ceremonies other than those of the Roman Catholic Church were permitted. The situation improved after 1945 under the new Spanish law prohibiting prosecution because of religious belief and private worship. Until 1951, the church was isolated from the rest of its sister churches. The second bishop, elected at a synod in 1954, began the reconstruction of the church under many adversities, including the opposition of the government. Nevertheless, he succeeded and relationships were established with the churches of the Anglican Communion.

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 legally recognized the existence of non-Roman Catholic Churches.

SPANISH REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In October 1980, the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church was fully integrated into the Anglican Communion under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The church has a synodical polity. It is a synodical church governed by a bishop in the Synod. The Synod is the highest authority in the church. The clergy and laity have equal representation in it. The parishes are represented by one cleric and by one lay person. The Synod elects the Standing Committee, which governs the church between synods. The Synods are held every two years. The church is organized in three areas or deaneries, each under the direction of an archdeacon.

The church has departments for youth, women, ecumenism, Christian education, mission and evangelization. The church has also a very important social program with immigrants, which is active in many parishes.

The church is in full communion with the Old-Catholic Union of Utrecht, is a member of the Porvoo Communion, a member of the World Council of Churches and a member of the Conference of European Churches.

SWEDEN

Population:

10 135 303
(February 28, 2018)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

60%

Church of Sweden

Svenska kyrkan

Uniting Church in Sweden

Equmeniakyrkan

CHURCH OF SWEDEN

Svenska kyrkan

Dioceses: 13

Congregations: 3 500

Membership: 6 100 000

Archbishop: 1

Bishops: 13

Pastors: 3 426

The Church of Sweden is an Evangelical Lutheran Church. Christianity in Sweden traces its beginnings to the missionary endeavours of Ansgar (801-865), a Benedictine monk from France. Pagan traditions were finally overcome in the 11th century by German and English missionaries. The archdiocese of Uppsala, founded in 1164, and the University of Uppsala, founded in 1477, were signs of the church's growing strength during the centuries before 1500.

The Reformation was introduced in 1527 under King Gustav Vasa, and the first Lutheran archbishop of Uppsala was appointed in 1531. In 1541 the first Bible in Swedish appeared, the New Testament having been published in Swedish in 1526. In 1593 the convocation of clergy in Uppsala affirmed the position of the Church of Sweden as Lutheran. The Augsburg Confession was adopted as the doctrinal norm and the historic episcopacy was kept. The Edict of Toleration (1781) granted religious liberty to Christians of other confessions seeking to take up residence in Sweden. The 19th century brought upheavals in economic, cultural, political and religious life.

Until the 19th century the Church of Sweden was the only church recognized by the state and its affairs were regulated by the parliament (riksdag). It was only in the second half of the 19th century that a Church Assembly was established. On 1 January, 2000, the Church of Sweden was separated from the State.

The Church of Sweden has 13 dioceses. Each diocese is led by a bishop, whose tasks include ordaining pastors and deacons, performing visitations of the parishes, chairing the chapter and the diocesan board.

CHURCH OF SWEDEN

On the national level, the Archbishop of Uppsala chairs the Synod of Bishops and the Church of Sweden Central Board. The Archbishop also represents the Church of Sweden in ecumenical and international relations. The decision-making body on the national level is the General Synod with 251 members, elected directly by all church members, meeting twice annually and deciding all matters concerning the regulation of church life. Every fourth year elections are held for all the decision-making bodies at parish, diocesan and national level.

The Church of Sweden Mission (1874) remains active in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Liberia, Ethiopia, India and Malaysia.

The Evangelical National Missionary Society (1856) is active in Ethiopia, Tanzania and India. The Swedish Jerusalem Society (1900) works in Israel.

The Church of Sweden is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITING CHURCH IN SWEDEN

Equmeniakyrkan

Congregations: 697

Membership: 63 000

The Uniting Church in Sweden is the most recently established church in Sweden. It was formed through a merger of the Baptist Union of Sweden, the United Methodist Church and the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden on 4 June 2011.

The congregations of the Uniting Church in Sweden are found throughout Sweden.

The Uniting Church in Sweden is the first church body in Sweden to have a three-part leadership. It has seven regions and seven regional church leaders. It forms one of the largest governing bodies in Sweden when meeting for the annual Church Conference.

The Equmenia Youth is one of the strongest youth movements in Sweden. The vigorous youth work has broad contacts in Swedish society and is an effective form of evangelism and diaconal work.

Mutual cooperation overseas is carried out in the two Congos, in Ecuador, in India, in Japan and in Nicaragua. The church maintains contact with several Reformed Churches and with Churches in the Nordic-Baltic countries.

The Uniting Church in Sweden is a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Methodist Council, Baptist World Alliance, the World Council of Churches, the European Baptist Federation, the European Methodist Council, the International Fellowship of Free Evangelical Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

SWITZERLAND

Population:

8 482 200

(December 31, 2017)

Main religion:

Christianity

Christianity:

77%

**Federation of Swiss
Protestant Churches**

Schweizerischer
Evangelischer Kirchenbund
Fédération des Églises
protestantes de Suisse

**Old-Catholic Church
of Switzerland**

Christkatholische Kirche
der Schweiz
Église vieille-catholique de
la Suisse
Chiesa cattolica cristiana
della Svizzera

**United Methodist Church
in Switzerland**

Evangelisch-Methodistische
Kirche in der Schweiz
Église méthodiste unie de Suisse

FEDERATION OF SWISS PROTESTANT CHURCHES

Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund Fédération des Églises protestantes de Suisse

Organizational units: 8

Member churches: 26

Congregations: 1 025

Membership: 2 213 000

Pastors: 2 315

The Protestant Churches in Switzerland are products of the 16th century Reformation. They are cantonal churches, distinct and independent from one another, mainly Zwinglian in the German-speaking part of the country, and Calvinist in the francophone areas. Besides John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli, other reformers like Heinrich Bullinger, Theodore Beza and Pierre Viret also influenced Christianity in Switzerland. The Helvetic Confession of 1566, drawn up by Bullinger and adopted by most of the cantonal churches, has formed the main link in their spiritual unity. In 1858 a conference of Swiss churches established relations between the cantonal churches and paved the way for the foundation of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Switzerland in 1920. This at first consisted only of national churches, but it soon admitted the Free Evangelical Churches, the Methodist Church and the Evangelische Gemeinschaft. The constitution of the Federation was revised in 1950.

The cantonal churches vary in legal status. Some are still state churches, some are quite independent, and others have a concordat relationship with the state. Diverse in their constitutions, liturgies and manuals of religious instructions, they nevertheless have many points in common.

The Federation has a staff of both German-speaking and French-speaking persons, of these some are lay people. There are various departments. Some of them have charitable nature; others are responsible for theological research, problems of migration, diaconal programmes, pilgrimage, church law, finance and administration.

In 2012 the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches main office reorganized its processes and structures. There are now 8 organizational

FEDERATION OF SWISS PROTESTANT CHURCHES

units which support the member churches in dealing with current issues and key questions. They represent the point of intersection between the member churches and their institutions, coordinate the relations of the Federation and its institutions with national and international partners, as well as ecumenical contacts, etc.

Currently the Federation is made up of 26 member churches - 24 cantonal churches and two free churches: the Evangelical Free Church of Geneva and the Evangelical Methodist Church of Switzerland.

The legislative body of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches is the Assembly of Delegates. It meets twice a year. The Assembly of Delegates elects the presidium and the Council members. The Council is the executive body led by the Council president. As a rule, the seven Council members meet once a month. The Diaconal Conference, the think tank of the Federation, consists of delegates from the member churches, as well as diaconal institutions and organizations. It meets twice a year. The Women's Conference, a networking and exchange platform for associated organizations and representatives, consists of members from various areas, including member churches of the Federation, Swiss Protestant Women and the Interest Group of Feminist Theologians. At the Assembly of Delegates the member churches are represented by a total number of 70 delegates, while the Diaconal Conference and the Women's Conference have two delegates each. Four delegates of the Diaconal and Women Conferences have no voting rights. The Federation maintains relations with churches in East and West Europe and in South Africa.

The Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH OF SWITZERLAND

Christkatholische Kirche der Schweiz
Église vieille-catholique de la Suisse
Chiesa cattolica cristiana della Svizzera

Dioceses: 1

Parishes: 29

Membership: 14 000

Bishop: 1

Priests: 40

Permanent deacons: 4

The Christian Catholic or Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland is the third established Church in the country, and like the Roman Catholic and the Reformed Church is officially recognised by the State.

The Church emerged from the protests against the declaration of the 1870's I Vatican Council. Whereas the revolt in Germany was led by theological professors, the Swiss revolt was led by laymen.

This led to the birth of Old Catholic dioceses in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. In Switzerland, the process lasted from 1871 to 1876. In 1875 at Olten the National Synod was constituted and approved the constitution of the Church. In 1876, again at Olten the synod elected the first bishop, Eduard Herzog (1841-1924), who had previously been professor of theology in Lucerne, who was consecrated three months later by the German Old-Catholic bishop at Rheinfelden. He initiated discussions on the possibility of union with both Orthodox and Anglican Churches and became one of the pioneers of today's ecumenical movement. In 1889 the Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland formed the Union of Utrecht together with the Old-Catholic churches in the Netherlands and Germany. The unifying organ of the Union of Utrecht is the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference (IBC), which meets annually, although it does not exercise any jurisdiction over the member Churches. The Archbishop of Utrecht is president of the IBC.

In several Swiss cantons the Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland is officially recognized by the state authorities. The Old-Catholic Faculty

OLD-CATHOLIC CHURCH OF SWITZERLAND

of Theology at the University of Bern (since 2001 department for Old-Catholic Theology, since 2017 Institute of Old-Catholic Theology) also serves foreign students from other Old-Catholic churches and from Orthodox churches. Women have been admitted to holy orders since 1985 (diaconate) and 1999 (priesthood).

The Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches and the International Old-Catholic Bishops' Conference.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN SWITZERLAND

Evangelisch-Methodistische Kirche in der Schweiz Église méthodiste unie de Suisse

Congregations: 109

Professing members: 5 380

Active Clergy: 76

The first missionaries of Methodism in Switzerland came from France (French-speaking branch from British Methodism) and Germany (German-speaking branches from US Methodism).

The United Methodist Church in Switzerland is the product of three different Methodist movements. In 1840, the first Wesleyan congregation was established in Lausanne (French-speaking) and continued till 1900. In 1856, the Episcopal Methodist Church started its work in Lausanne and Zurich (German-speaking). Ten years later the Evangelical Association (a German-speaking branch of US Methodist background) established the first congregation in Bern. In 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren Church, of which the Evangelical Association was a part, and the Methodist Church united worldwide and became the United Methodist Church. In Switzerland and France, the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church was implemented in 1971. The United Methodist Church in Switzerland is part of the Switzerland-France-North Africa Annual Conference (yearly synod).

The period of establishment of the United Methodist Church in Switzerland was difficult. Any religious movement that belonged neither to the Catholic nor to the Reformed Protestant Church was treated as a sect. Violence against preachers and lay missionaries was not uncommon. But by 1922, the Methodist Episcopal Church joined the newly established Federation of Protestant Churches in Switzerland. Later, in 1971, it was a founding member of the National Ecumenical Council in Switzerland.

Methodism in Switzerland became itself the source of missionary work to other countries in Europe. First Swiss missionaries were also

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN SWITZERLAND

sent out to Africa and South America. Today, Connexio, the mission and diaconal network of the United Methodist Church in Switzerland, still has a number of employees in Latin America, in the DR Congo, and in Cambodia for project coordination and ministries related to development cooperation, emergency aid, missionary congregation building, and inter-church aid.

The Annual Conference, the basic body of the church, is presided by bishop Dr. Patrick Streiff, who is the bishop for the 16 countries of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe of the United Methodist Church to which Switzerland belongs.

The church maintains close ties with various social and other institutions, which have grown out of the diaconal ministry of the church (particularly in the field of ministries with children/youth and elderly people).

The United Methodist Church in Switzerland is, through its national, regional or worldwide levels, a member of ecumenical associations, including the World Methodist Council, the World Council of Churches, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and the Conference of European Churches.

UKRAINE

UKRAINE

**Reformed Church in
Transcarpathia**
Kárpátaljai Református Egyház

Population:
42 364 933
(February 1, 2018)

Main religion:
Christianity

Christianity:
73%

REFORMED CHURCH IN TRANSCARPATHIA

Kárpátaljai Református Egyház

Presbyteries: 3

Congregations: 114

Membership: 140 000

Bishop: 1

Pastors: 78

The Reformed Church in Transcarpathia (Sub-Carpathia) is a Reformed Church in Ukraine.

The Reformed Church in Transcarpathia was founded in 1921. Until 1923, its parishes belonged to the Reformed Church in Hungary. After the Transcarpathian region became a part of Czechoslovakia, they belonged to the Church in Czechoslovakia until 1938. In 1938–39 the parishes were re-incorporated into the Reformed Church of Hungary. The Reformed Church in Transcarpathia became an independent church in 1948.

The church members were Hungarian ethnic people; in the time of formation the church counted approximately 65,000 members in 77 congregations. During World War II 40,000 people, including pastors, left Sub-Carpathia. Transcarpathia became part of the Soviet Union. The church lost its legal status. The structure of the church did not exist. In the 1970s the situation changed a bit. The church was allowed to train pastors. After the period of the Soviet Union churches and schools were re-opened. The independence of Ukraine in 1991 paved the way for prosperity of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia. In 2009 the church had 114 parishes and 76 pastors.

The Reformed Church in Transcarpathia is organized into three Presbyteries: the Beregi, Ugocsai and Ungi.

The church is headed by the bishop.

It consists of Hungarian-speaking reformed communities in the Carpathian Basin.

The Reformed Church in Transcarpathia is a member of the Hungarian Reformed Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

UNITED KINGDOM

- Baptist Union of Great Britain
- Church in Wales
Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru
- Church of England
- Church of Scotland
- Congregational Federation
- Council of African and Afro-Caribbean Churches UK
- Methodist Church in Britain
- Presbyterian Church of Wales
Eglwys Bresbyteraidd Cymru
- Salvation Army – UK Territory and Ireland
- The Scottish Episcopal Church
- Shiloh United Church of Christ
- Apostolic Worldwide
- The United Reformed Church

Population:
66 181 585
(July 1, 2017)

Main religion:
Christianity

Christianity:
59,5%

BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN

Churches: 1 953

Membership: 120 439

Ministers/Pastors: 2 497

Organized Baptist life in England had two distinct beginnings: the General Baptists who emerged from a group that, led by Thomas Helwys, returned in 1611 from the Netherlands where it had sought religious freedom and had formed itself into a Separatist Church under the leadership of John Smyth, and the Particular Baptists who broke away in 1633 from a Calvinistic Church in London. The first one was Arminian in theology with a Presbyterian Church order, the second was Calvinistic of an independent type.

A “New Connexion” of the more evangelical General Baptists was formed in 1770 under the influence of the Methodist movement. The first Baptist church in Wales was founded in 1649 at Illston, near Swansea. Baptists had founded work in Ireland by the mid-seventeenth century and in Scotland by the mid-eighteenth century. The formation of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, whose first missionary William Carey went to India in 1793, was the most notable fruit of the renewal of Particular Baptist life.

In 1812-1813 the first Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland was formed. It gradually drew into its fellowship the General Baptists of the New Connexion and the latter amalgamated with the Baptist Union in 1891. A small group of Baptist churches tracing its origins back to 1880 was known as the Old Baptist Union. In 1993 the majority of these churches formed a new Association of Old Baptist Churches and came into membership with the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Certain churches have remained more strictly Calvinistic. They are usually known as Strict Baptists. The Strict Baptist Assembly continued until 1976 when it joined the Assembly of baptized churches holding the Calvinistic doctrine of Sovereign Grace to form the Grace Baptist Assembly.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain consists of its member churches, 13 Regional Associations and 6 colleges. Three national Specialist Teams provide help and support for churches and ministers.

BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN

The Annual Assembly includes celebration, inspiration, reflection and deliberation. It is the place where churches are directly represented through their delegates, alongside ministers and members of the Baptist Union Council. The Council, meeting twice a year, consists of some 80 members mostly drawn from churches, colleges and co-opted delegates along with Association and Specialist Teams, and helps to set the broad strategic direction of the Union. Whilst leadership of different kinds is exercised at a variety of points and in a variety of ways in the Union, the key location of organizational leadership and coordination sits with the Baptist Steering Group, which brings together leaders from Associations, Specialist Teams and Colleges in order to realise the vision for effective interdependent and collaborative working.

The General Secretary is appointed to help guide and lead the Baptist Union, and to serve as representative of its members to both the wider church and society. The President's main role is as a communicator/facilitator of the Union's vision and mission.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain is a member of the Free Churches Group, Churches Together in England, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the European Baptist Federation, the Baptist World Alliance, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

CHURCH IN WALES

Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru

Dioceses: 6

Parishes: 673

Membership: 45 727

Bishops: 6

The Welsh nation, which was Christianised during the Roman occupation of Britain, is the oldest Christian nation in the British Isles. Twenty-eight years before St Augustine landed in Kent in AD 597 to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons, a synod had been held in Wales at which St David, who was later to become its patron saint, had spoken against the Pelagian heresy. St David is the only native born patron saint of the countries of Britain and Ireland. Before him, there were other Christian figures in Wales such as St Dyfrig and St Illtud, St Teilo, St Padarn and St Deiniol.

The Church in Wales remained a part of the Church of England until its disestablishment in 1920. The Province of Wales was created in 1920 after the disestablishment of the four Welsh dioceses of the Church of England, and the partial disendowment of the Church in Wales by the Welsh Church Acts of 1914 and 1919. Two new dioceses were created in 1921 and 1923.

The church has six dioceses and is led by its six bishops and overseen by a Governing Body. One of the diocesan bishops is elected archbishop of Wales and he remains bishop of his diocese.

It is now an autonomous province within the Anglican Communion and conducts all its public activities bilingually in Welsh and English. It works closely with the Welsh government and other agencies for the benefit of the people of Wales. There are 168 Church in Wales schools, employing 2,978 staff and providing for 21,261 pupils.

The Church in Wales is active in Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales), Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Porvoo Communion, the Anglican Communion, the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Dioceses: 44

Parishes: 13 150

Membership: 25 000 000

The Church of England consists of two provinces, Canterbury and York, with in total 44 dioceses and 13,150 parishes. It covers England, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, some parishes in Wales and congregations and chaplaincies in the Diocese in Europe, Morocco, Turkey and the Asian countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union. It has over 20,000 clergy, Readers and Church Army officers and thousands of authorised lay ministers.

Almost half the population of England claim to belong to the Church of England with around 1 million people attending services each Sunday. About 3 million people attend its services on Christmas Day or Christmas Eve.

Its roots go back to when a Christian church came into existence in what was the Roman province of Britain. The Church of England (the *Ecclesia Anglicana* – or the English Church) was the result of a combination of three streams of Christianity, the Roman tradition of St Augustine and his successors, the remnants of the old Romano-British church and the Celtic tradition from Scotland and associated with St Aidan and St Cuthbert.

At the Reformation the Church of England was among the churches that broke with Rome. The theology that then developed is most authoritatively expressed in its three ‘historic formularies,’ the Thirty Nine Articles, the Book of Common Prayer and the 1662 Ordinal.

It is a Church that has consciously retained continuity with the Church of the Patristic and Medieval periods in terms of its use of the catholic creeds, its retention of the three orders of bishops, priests and deacons, its buildings, aspects of its liturgy, but which also embodied Protestant insights in its theology and in the overall shape of its liturgical practice. It can be said to be both ‘catholic and reformed.’

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The Church of England is part of the Anglican Communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury the focus of unity of the entire Anglican Communion. It is a member of the Conference of European Churches, the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Churches Together in England, the Porvoo Communion and the World Council of Churches.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Presbyteries: 46

Congregations: 1 526

Membership: 1 149 000

Pastors: 1 042

The Church of Scotland has its roots in the missionary labours of St Ninian and St Columba, and in the early Celtic Church. Missions arrived in Scotland in the 5th century, culminating in the mission of St Columba in the middle of the 6th century and the founding of the great monastery of Iona. Prior to the middle of the 11th century the Church of Scotland was Celtic in character. In the 11th century, under the reign of King Malcolm III and Queen Margaret, the Church of Scotland came increasingly under the jurisdiction of the Church of Rome.

Like other countries in Northern Europe, Scotland came under the sway of the Reformation. The Church of Scotland was reformed in 1560, under the leadership of John Knox. The same year the Scottish Parliament adopted Protestantism as the nation's religion. In 1690 the Church of Scotland was established in its Presbyterian polity. Various secessions occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries, but since 1929 the Church of Scotland has been largely reunited. Its constitutions, as set out in the Church of Scotland Act, 1921, exhibit the model of "a free Church in a free State".

The Church of Scotland (the Kirk) government is organized on the basis of courts.

At a local level, the parish, the court is a kirk session. Kirk sessions oversee the local congregation and its parish, and consist of elders presided over by a minister.

At district level, the court is a presbytery. Presbyteries consist of all the ministers in the district and an equal number of elders, along with members of the diaconate. There are 46 presbyteries across Scotland, England, Europe and Jerusalem.

At national level, the court is the highest court of the Kirk, the General Assembly. The General Assembly consists of around 400 ministers, 400

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

elders, and members of the diaconate, all representing the presbyteries. It meets at the same time in May each year for a week. The General Assembly sets the policy and doctrinal position of the Church.

In 1966 the General Assembly recognized the eligibility of women for eldership and in 1968 the ministry was opened to women.

Each court of the Church is chaired by a Moderator. The Moderator of the General Assembly is recognized as a Church leader. The Moderator serves for one year. The Moderator of the Presbytery and of the General Assembly may be male or female and may be an ordained minister, elder or deacon.

Each of these courts have committees which carry out the policy and practical decision of the Church.

The Ecumenical Relations Committee is in conversation with several other denominations.

The Church's overseas work includes working with partner churches in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean areas. Its activities cover also Israel and Palestine.

The Church is active in social care, support and services.

The Church of Scotland is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

CONGREGATIONAL FEDERATION

Churches: 248

Membership: 6 282, plus Children: 2 441

Accredited Ministers: 183

The Congregational Federation is a small Christian denomination in Great Britain comprising just under 250 congregations. The Federation brings together independent churches characterised by a Congregationalist church governance and evangelical Calvinist theology. It provides support and guidance to member churches both financially and otherwise.

The Federation was formed in 1972 from those Congregational churches which did not enter the union of the Presbyterian Church of England with the Congregational Church in England and Wales (the body that succeeded the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1966) to form the United Reformed Church. These were joined in 2000 by member churches of the Congregational Union of Scotland that chose not to join with the United Reformed Church.

It is a member of the International Congregational Fellowship, an international network of Congregational churches and their national associations. Some of its churches are also in membership of the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches.

Member Churches: 28

The Council is a member of Pentecostal Church and was founded in UK by the people with African and Afro-Caribbean origins. Significant growth of their churches only began after 1948.

The Most Reverend Father Olu Abiola initiated the formation of a Council after it was realised that the African community needed a united body to advance the Christian faith. Under the precept that Unity is strength, the Council of African and Allied Churches was formed in 1979 after previous attempts had failed. The membership drew tremendously in the early eighties and also included churches of Caribbean origin. Due to the diversity of membership the name was changed to reflect its membership in 1986 to the Council of African and Afro-Caribbean Churches. The Council's membership is open to all Churches that confess the Lord Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

The Council takes the responsibility to ensure that their members operate as one body in Christ through witnessing and evangelism. The Council supports its members by having their representatives attend special events and make efforts to develop member churches and churches that embrace the African way of worship. The Council will assist in training Ministers, obtaining places of worship and properties as well as mediate on the churches behalf in time of crisis.

The Council has among its priorities to educate its members and the general public on issues of religion, social and political matters. It intervenes on behalf of members on immigration issues and offers support should the Council believe their human rights are being breached.

The Council has an independent church community. In 1985, the Council became an associate member of the British Council of Churches and a member of the Church Federal Council and the Council of European Churches in 1987 and 1990 respectively. Through involvement with the Centre for Black and White Christian Partnership, the Council encourages inter-church relations, mutual trust and seeks to build up competent leaders.

COUNCIL OF AFRICAN AND AFRO-CARIBBEAN CHURCHES UK

Though with a small number of members, the Council actively participates in different ecclesiastic and ecumenical movements. This organization is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Christian Enquiry Agency Council and Religious Education Council.

METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITAIN

Districts: 31

Circuits: 375

Churches: 4 650

Membership: 1.2 million (official: 380 269)

Ministers: 1 760

The United Kingdom is the birthplace of Methodism. The Methodist Church in Great Britain is the fourth largest Christian denomination in Britain. The work of John Wesley and his younger brother Charles Wesley led directly to the founding of the church in the 18th century. The current body was formed in 1932 and includes England, Scotland and Wales.

As the Methodist societies grew at a fast rate, some way of keeping in touch and organizing them was needed. John Wesley had held what became the Annual Conference of Methodist preachers. In 1784 he made provision for the continuance as a corporate body after his death of the 'Yearly Conference of the People called Methodists'. He nominated 100 people and declared them to be its members and laid down the method by which their successors were to be appointed.

After the death of John Wesley, the authority of the leadership of Methodism switched from one man to the Methodist Conference. During the 19th century there were many factions in the church, with the largest of the offshoots being the Primitive Methodists and Wesleyan Methodists. Gradually most of these were reunited, the last union being in 1932, to form the present day Methodist Church.

Methodists are linked together in a 'Connexion' of churches, circuits and districts. This is where the whole church acts and decides together.

The Circuit is the basic structure of the Methodist Church, and is usually formed from local churches in a defined area, served by a team of local preachers and ministers including the superintendent minister. The purpose of the Circuit is to use effectively the resources of ministry. It is looking after the pastoral care, training and evangelistic work of the fellowship of the local churches. Methodist circuits are gathered into

METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITAIN

districts. The district serves a geographical group of circuits and is led by the district chair.

The supreme governing body of the Methodist Church is the Methodist Conference which meets annually in June or July, hosted by a different district or group of districts each year. The Conference is presided over by the President of Conference who is a Methodist Minister, supported by the Vice President who can be a lay person or a deacon. Both of these appointments are made annually by election. The Conference is the body that agrees policy for the Methodist Church.

The Methodist Church in Great Britain participates in the World Methodist Council, the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches and other ecumenical associations.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WALES

Eglwys Bresbyteraidd Cymru

Presbyteries: 14

Churches: 600

Membership: 20 000

Ministers: 45

Christian workers: 30

The Presbyterian Church of Wales is one of the largest Christian denominations in Wales. The church had its beginnings in the evangelical revival of the 18th century. Its founders, Howell Harris, Daniel Rowland, William Williams and others (both clerical and lay) were members of the Church of England. Soon after 1735 they established religious societies, similar to the Methodist societies founded in England by John Wesley. Societies in all parts of Wales were set up during the years 1735–1752, under the charge of lay exhorters, and lay and clerical superintendents who supervised the work. In 1811, under the leadership of Thomas Charles of Bala, an Anglican clergyman, a number of exhorters were ordained. Thus the movement became separated from the Church of England. Two synods or Associations were formed for the new church, one for South Wales and one for North Wales. In 1823 the Calvinistic Methodist Connexion formulated its confession of faith, rules and discipline, constitution and church government.

During the 19th century theological colleges for ministerial training were founded in Bala and Trefeca. In 1845 the first edition of *Y Traethodydd* – a quarterly journal still in existence – was published.

The first General Assembly of the Church was held in 1864. It united the two synods. In the 20th century the name of the church was changed to the Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales, or the Presbyterian Church of Wales. In 1933 the amended constitution was adopted and received the assent of Parliament. In 1947 the Association in the East was established for English speaking churches. In 1968 the Mission Board was formed by uniting the Overseas Mission and the Forward Movement.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WALES

The church has strong ties with the Presbyterian churches in North India and Burma. It owns and runs two training centres, Coleg y Bala and Coleg Trefeca.

The Presbyterian Church of Wales is a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

SALVATION ARMY – UK TERRITORY AND IRELAND

Membership: 50 000

Pastors: 1 500 Salvation Army officers (full-time ministers)

Employees: 4 000

The Salvation Army was founded in 1865 by William Booth who began as a minister of the Methodist New Connexion Church in England. He walked the streets of London to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor, the homeless, the hungry, and the destitute. His fervour led to disagreement with church leaders in London. As a result, he withdrew from the church and travelled throughout England, conducting evangelistic meetings.

In 1865, William Booth was invited to hold a series of evangelistic meetings in the East End of London. He set up a tent in a Quaker graveyard, and his services became an instant success. This proved to be the end of his wanderings.

Thieves, prostitutes, gamblers, and drunkards were among Booth's first converts to Christianity. Many churches, however, did not accept Booth's followers because of their past. So Booth continued giving his new converts spiritual direction, challenging them to save others like themselves. In 1867, Booth had only 10 full-time workers, but by 1874, the number had grown to 1,000 volunteers and 42 evangelists, all serving under the name "The Christian Mission". Booth assumed the title of general superintendent. Known as the "Hallelujah Army", the converts spread out of the East End of London into neighbouring areas and then to other cities.

Booth was reading a printer's proof of the 1878 annual report when he noticed the statement "The Christian Mission is a volunteer army". Crossing out the words "volunteer army", he penned in "Salvation Army". From those words came the basis of the foundation deed of The Salvation Army.

From that point, converts became soldiers of Christ and were known then, as now, as Salvationists. The organization sees the Christian Church engaged in spiritual warfare. The Army has used to advantage

SALVATION ARMY – UK TERRITORY AND IRELAND

certain soldierly features such as uniforms, flags and ranks to identify, inspire and regulate its endeavours.

The Salvation Army movement expanded rapidly to Canada, Australia, France, Switzerland, India, South Africa, Iceland. The Salvation Army is now active in virtually every corner of the world.

After the Government, the Salvation Army is the biggest provider of social care in the UK. The Army has 152 homes for alcoholics, 596 homes for the aged, 189 homes for children, 1,119 schools, 30 Maternity hospital/clinics, 146 hospitals and so on.

THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Dioceses: 7

Churches: 350

Membership: 54 000

The Scottish Episcopal Church is a welcoming and inclusive Church that traces its history back to the beginnings of Christianity in Scotland. It is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. Within its Church there are seven historic regional areas, called dioceses, covering the whole of Scotland. It is governed by a representative body known as the General Synod which meets each year and which is comprised of the College of Bishops, and equal numbers of clergy and lay people. The leading Bishop is called the Primus because he is *primus inter pares* (first among equals). The Scottish Episcopal Church's worship is rich and varied, offering experience of a variety of liturgical and musical styles. At the heart of its worship lies the weekly celebration of the Eucharist.

The Scottish Episcopal Church is a member of the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

SHILOH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST APOSTOLIC WORLDWIDE

The Shiloh United Church was established by Archbishop Dr. Malachi Ramsay in Great Britain in 1965.

The Shiloh United Church is governed by a church council made of a bishop (the chairman of all meetings), pastors, deacons and selected members of the church.

Each year there is a church council meeting and an Annual General meeting for policy making, planning and evaluation of all church business.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Churches: 1 406

Membership: 49 500

Pastors: 640

Congregational and Presbyterian Churches were established in Britain in the 16th and 17th centuries. The union between the Congregational Church in England and Wales and the Presbyterian Church of England took place in October 1972.

In 1981 the United Reformed Church entered into union with the Reformed Churches of Christ and in 2000 - with the Congregational Union of Scotland. It is in dialogue with other traditions on the subject of unity. In 1982 the United Reformed Church voted in favour of a covenant with the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the Moravian Church.

From 2005 to 2010 the congregations reduced by 90, the fourth highest number of closures for a British denomination over the period.

The United Reformed Church is governed by a combined form of congregationalism and Presbyterian polity. The General Assembly is the biennial assembly of the United Reformed Church, meeting every two years to celebrate, discuss and make decisions on the life and work of the denomination. Half of the members are lay persons, mostly elders, and half are ministers. The Mission Council is the executive body of the General Assembly, and meets twice a year. The purpose of the Mission Council is to enable the Church, in its General Assembly, to take a more comprehensive view of the activity and the policy of the Church, to decide more carefully about priorities and to encourage the outreach of the Church to the community. The Mission Council has several advisory groups. Synods are regional administrative groupings of churches. There are 13 Synods in the United Reformed Church. Each of the 13 synods is represented by four people, including its moderator with a pastoral and leadership ministry within the Province. Each Synod gives practical support to churches in legal and property matters, discusses matters of faith and policy and links to Assembly, and fosters ecumenical relations

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

and actions. Local United Reformed churches are gathered together into 13 Synods.

In Britain the United Reformed Church shows its Ecumenical Commitment through the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Action of Churches Together in Scotland, the Churches Together in Wales, the Churches Together in England, the Free Church Federal Council. The United Reformed Church is also a member of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

INTERNATIONAL AREAS

Ecumenical Patriarchate

European Baptist Federation

Federation of Evangelical
Lutheran Churches in Russia
and Other States

Moravian Church – European
Continental Province

Salvation Army –
International Headquarters

United Methodist Church –
Nordic & Baltic Area

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

Under the Immediate Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are:

Autonomous Churches:

Church of Finland

Church of Estonia

Semi-autonomous Church:

Church of Crete (with 9 Dioceses)

Archbishoprics and Metropolitanates:

Turkey: 13

Greece: 5 (Dodecanese) + 36 ("New Lands" in Northern Greece)

USA: 8

Remaining Diaspora: 17+5 (Exarchates and Consistories)

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople is one of the fourteen autocephalous churches (or "jurisdictions") that together compose the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is headed by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, Archbishop of Constantinople.

According to the tradition of St Andrew who in the first century came to the area and established the church. The Emperor Constantine began a process that led to the adoption of Christianity as the imperial state religion by Emperor Theodosius in the late 4th century. Constantine also moved the empire's capital from Rome to the small Greek city of Byzantium along the Bosphorus in 330 and renamed it Constantinople or New Rome. The Church of Byzantium appears in history first as a bishopric of the diocese of Heraclea, Thrace. It grew to become a great ecclesiastical centre. Canon 3 of the First Council of Constantinople (381) stated that the bishop of that city "shall have primacy of honour after the Bishop of Rome because Constantinople is the New Rome". The fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451) gave a definite shape to the organization of the Church of Constantinople. From 520 onwards the head of the church became known as the Ecumenical Patriarch. After the great schism between Rome and Constantinople in the 11th century,

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

the Ecumenical Patriarch became the *primus inter pares* among all the patriarchs of the Orthodox churches.

Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. While they placed many restrictions on Christians, in some ways the Turks enhanced the Patriarch's authority by making him the civil leader of the multi-ethnic Orthodox community within the Empire, and he retained his position as the first of the Orthodox Patriarchs. This gave him a certain authority over the Greek Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, which were also within Ottoman territory'.

In 1832 an independent Greek state was established, and a separate autocephalous Church of Greece was set up in 1833. After World War I, there was a major exchange of population between Greece and Turkey.

The Patriarchate of Constantinople is governed on the basis of the decisions of the ecumenical councils, the holy canons, and the long history, tradition and praxis of the church. The patriarch is elected by an assembly of the "endemousa", a synod consisting of all metropolitans who are Turkish citizens, residing in Turkey. The synod is the official organ of authority of the patriarchate, managing spiritual affairs such as the nomination of the metropolitan members of the synod, the election of new bishops, overseeing monasteries, etc. By the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) the Turkish Republic is bound to protect the Greek Christians in Constantinople. The patriarchate holds jurisdiction over the faithful in Europe (Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland, the autonomous Church of Finland, and the Russian Exarchy of Western Europe) and the archbishoprics of Australia and New Zealand. The archbishop of America (based in New York) governs the Greek Orthodox Church of North America also under the general jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch. The dioceses of Latin America belong to the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate was among the first to participate in the formation and development of the ecumenical movement, and is particularly known for its Encyclical to "All the Churches of Christ", issued in 1920.

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

The patriarchate is involved in the coordination of inter-orthodox relations, and particularly the preparations for the holy and great synod of the Orthodox churches. It is also engaged in bilateral theological dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, the Ancient Oriental churches, the Old-Catholic churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate is a member of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

EUROPEAN BAPTIST FEDERATION

Unions and Conventions: 54

Membership: 826 000

The European Baptist Federation (EBF) has approximately 826,000 Baptists in 54 Unions and Conventions, and 5 affiliated churches and networks, stretching from Portugal to the far reaches of Russia. Included in this family are Baptists in Eurasia and the Middle and Near East. EBF leaders work continuously to help strengthen the relationships in these countries where no formal union exists.

The European Baptist Federation also serves as the European representative for the Baptist World Alliance.

According to its statutes, the purpose of the EBF “is to strengthen and draw together Baptists in Europe and the Middle East on the basis of their Christian witness and distinctive convictions, to encourage and inspire them in faith and fellowship and shared responsibility, and to seek in all its endeavours to fulfil the will of Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour.”

The EBF was founded in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, in 1949, to unite European Baptists as Europe emerged from the devastation of World War II.

The EBF represents nearly every country in Europe and Euro-Asia and also five Unions in the Middle East. The EBF is one of six Regions which make up the Baptist World Alliance.

A key priority for the EBF has been the development of theological education to train future leaders for the churches and Unions. Most Unions have their own seminaries training pastors, church musicians and others.

European Baptist Aid (EBAid) is an initiative which has the goal of being a more effective channel for humanitarian relief and development projects through the member unions of the EBF.

The EBF Council which meets annually in September of each year is the main decision-making body for the EBF. The Council is made up of representatives of the Unions, the International Baptist Theological Study Centre, lay members and certain partner mission organizations. It usually numbers between 120-130 delegates.

FEDERATION OF EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN RUSSIA AND OTHER STATES

Congregations: 430

Membership: 25 000

Archbishop: 1

Bishops: 8

There have been Lutherans in Russia for more than 400 years. In the area around St Petersburg there have been Finnish Lutherans since the time of the Reformation in the 16th century.

During the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725), many Western Europeans were invited to Russia to help implement Peter's westernising policies. Among these were German Lutherans who founded congregations in St Petersburg and elsewhere. The first church built in St Petersburg (founded 1703) was a Lutheran Church.

Catherine the Great (reigned 1762-1796), herself originally a German Lutheran, invited German farmers to settle in newly-conquered lands of the lower Volga River.

In 1832, de jure recognition was granted to the Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia (ELChR) was established, uniting Lutheran and Reformed congregations in the administrative regions of Russia Proper and the Kingdom of Poland. The ELChR was granted the status of a state church for minorities.

In 1905, full religious freedom was granted with an Edict of Toleration and Lutheran churches were finally allowed to conduct services and their liturgy in the Russian language. By 1914, the Lutheran Church in Russia Proper itself had grown to include 1,828 congregations comprising 3,660,000 members of various nationalities.

During World War I, a policy of mass deportation of the German minorities in Russia was implemented. As a significant number of Russia's Lutherans were German or German-speaking, this severely affected the Lutheran Church. The deportation policies of the era was continued. During World War II, there was forced resettlement of the German population into Siberia and Central Asia. The Lutheran Church was kept alive underground.

FEDERATION OF EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN RUSSIA AND OTHER STATES

In 1988, Lutheran churches officially began to function again. With contributions from American Lutherans, a former Lutheran church on the outskirts of St Petersburg was purchased and converted into a seminary (dedicated in 1998). In another village near the city, the Finnish Lutheran Church helped to establish a learning centre to train pastors and lay leaders for the ethnically Finnish Ingrian Lutheran Church.

In 1991, the church became known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and the Other States and between 1992 and 1994, synods were organized in European Russia, Siberia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. In 1994, the first General Synod was held in St Petersburg. At the second General Synod in 1999, the title of the bishop was changed to archbishop.

Ecclesiastical authority is vested in the office of the archbishop, whose nominal seat is the Church of St Peter and St Paul in St Petersburg. The archbishop and the bishops of the regional Lutheran denominations within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States form an Episcopal Council. The main governing body of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States is the General Synod which meets every five years, while executive authority is vested with the Church Synod. The Church Synod is chaired by the General Consistory, headed by the archbishop. Around 30% of the church members are ethnically Russian.

The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Russia and Other States was established in 2011, replacing the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States. It brings together regional Lutheran churches in Russia, the former Soviet Union countries of Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, with a bishop heading each country church. The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Russia and Other States is governed by the Episcopal Council, led by a moderator.

MORAVIAN CHURCH – EUROPEAN CONTINENTAL PROVINCE

Congregations: 24
Membership: 13 700
Pastors: 52

The Moravian Church was founded in Herrnhut in 1727. Her roots reach back to the first reformation in Bohemia and Moravia that is connected to the name of Jan Hus. A group of his followers founded the Unitas Fratrum around the year 1457. As one of the earliest Protestant Churches the Unitas Fratrum connected later to the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Germany. From 1620 the Unitas Fratrum was forbidden in Bohemia and Moravia. The adherents sometimes lived their faith hidden, sometimes they left the country.

A group of refugees from Moravia in 1722 founded the settlement Herrnhut on the premises of Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf and started together with him a Christian community. People from persecuted Christian groups from all regions of Europe joined the young community. On 13 August 1727 they were united through the Holy Spirit as a “Brüdergemeine” (a congregation of sisters and brothers) during a celebration of Holy Communion. In 1732 they started mission abroad. The first destination was St. Thomas, today part of the US Virgin Islands. The Moravians worked among slaves, Inuit and other “forgotten people”. Through this missionary work a small worldwide church came into being. Today the worldwide Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) counts some one million members in Europe, North America, the Caribbean, South-America, Africa, and Asia. The European Continental Province today has congregations and communities in eight European Countries (Albania, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland). Most of the congregations in the Netherlands came into being through the migration of people from Suriname in the 1960s and 1970s. In her vision document the Moravian Church states: “Because migration has a great impact on our church, we can overcome borders. We create unity in diversity.”

MORAVIAN CHURCH – EUROPEAN CONTINENTAL PROVINCE

One of the most important gifts of the Moravian Church to the other churches is the booklet “Daily Watchwords”. This book provides for each day of the year two texts from the scriptures: one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament as a “watchword for the day”. It is at this moment translated in 60 languages and read by Christians in many churches.

SALVATION ARMY – INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Countries present in: 34

Territories and Commands: 13

Active officers: 1 554

Retired officers: 1 976

Soldiers: 43 160

Membership other than soldiers:

Adherents: 16 408 and **Junior soldiers:** 4 805

Number of employees: 16 219

Number of local places of worship and mission: 1 207

The Salvation Army was founded in 1865 in London, the United Kingdom, by William and Catherine Booth. In 1881 a small group of young women Salvationists, led by the eldest daughter of William and Catherine Booth, embarked for France to pioneer and spread the mission of The Salvation Army. Four years later, The Salvation Army entered Belgium. Since then the Army has not only spread all over Europe, but all over the world.

During the Second World War, The Salvation Army was forbidden in most of the countries in Europe, which were occupied by the German Nazi regime. The Salvation Army was also banned from Eastern Europe during the Russian Communist regime. In 1989, The Salvation Army entered Russia again after a 60-year absence. Since then its mission has been re-established in Eastern Europe, in countries where it had a presence in the past—countries like Hungary, Russia, and the Czech Republic.

In 2004 The Salvation Army commenced its mission in Warsaw, Poland, a country where it had not earlier been present. In 2006, The Salvation Army in Poland was registered as a Church, a Christian faith community, free to worship, free to engage in mission and free to register Polish and foreign citizens as members, soldiers and adherents of The Salvation Army. The latest country in Europe to recognise and register The Salvation Army is Slovakia; this happened in 2015.

The Salvation Army is a holiness movement, non-sacramental, with a quasi-military form and organisation. It has strong theological roots

SALVATION ARMY – INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

in eighteenth century Methodism and the pietism movement which blossomed on mainland Europe in the seventeenth century.

The International Headquarters of The Salvation Army is based in London: Its International Administration is divided into six distinct geographic zones, the Europe Zone being one of the six.

Its International Mission Statement reads: 'The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination.'

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH – NORDIC & BALTIC AREA

Dioceses: 2

Congregations: 210 (N & B & Eurasia)

Membership: 21 272

Bishops: 2

Pastors: 335

World War I weakened the connection between Europe and America, thus a substantial independence of Continental European Methodism from the Mother Church in the United States became necessary. In 1920 the General Conference decided to divide Europe into several Episcopal areas. The Northern Europe Episcopal Area, including Methodism in the Nordic Countries, was established and put under the supervisions of the Danish bishop, Anton Bast.

In 1924 the North Europe Episcopal Area organized as a Central Conference, and the Baltic-Slavic Annual Conference became integrated.

United Methodism in the Nordic and Baltic Countries, as well as Eurasia is organized within one Central Conference, which is called the Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference. The United Methodist Church within the Central Conference includes two Episcopal Areas: the United Methodist Church, Nordic and Baltic Area and the United Methodist Church, Eurasia Area. The Nordic and Baltic area is composed of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. In Finland there are 2 annual conferences, as there are 2 main languages Finnish and Swedish. The Eurasian area is composed of Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Moldova, Belorussia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The United Methodist Church, Nordic and Baltic Area is led by Bishop Christian Alsted, and the United Methodist Church, Eurasia Area is led by Bishop Eduard Khegay.



**“Together in
Hope and Witness”**

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