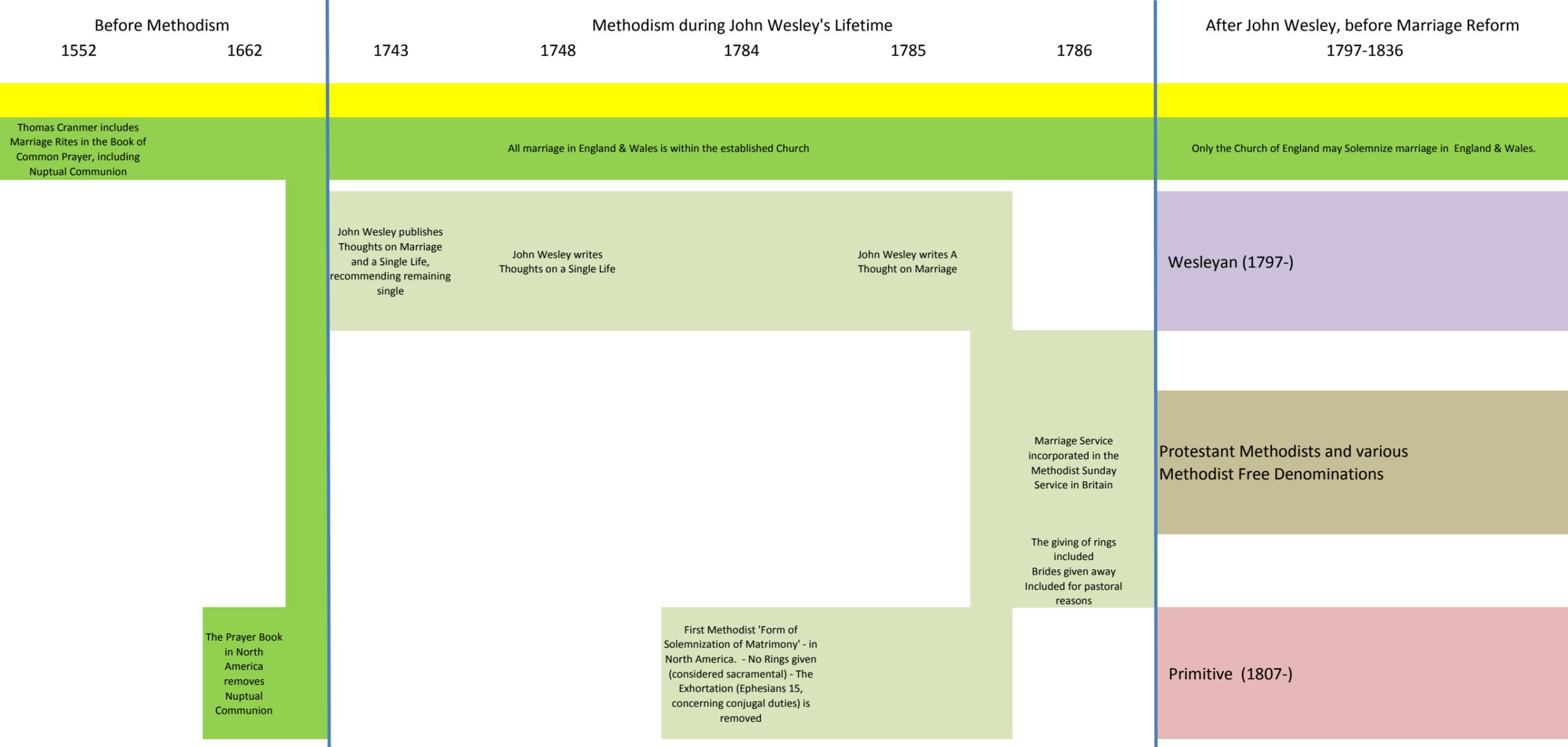


# History of Marriage in Methodism (Summary)



Key

- Church of England
- Methodism within the CofE
- Wesleyan Methodist
- Protestant Methodists and smaller and independent Methodist denominations
- Primitive Methodists
- United Methodist Free Church
- The Methodist Church
- Roman Catholic Church

After Marriage Reform Act - before the Deed of Union

1836

1837

1840

1845

1846

1857

1860

1862

1882

Law changed to permit marriage in non-conformist places of worship

Memorial to Conference seeking the licensing of Wesleyan chapels for marriage is **declined** by the Conference

The Conference declined to sanction the licensing of Chapels

The Conference gave a cautious welcome to the solemnization of marriage in Wesleyan Chapels, but that no Wesleyan Minister should feel compelled to conduct weddings

Wesleyan Methodist Marriage Service is produced, without: a requirement for banns; or Augustine's declaration that marriage was a remedy for sin. There is giving of rings but without prayer of blessing of the rings.

Giving away of the bride is restored. A pastoral response to social norms

Reintroduction of Augustine's reasons for marriage.

Practice varies considerably

United Methodist Free (1857-)

United free Methodists largely follow the Wesleyan form

Licensing of Primitive Methodist Chapels begins

Marriage service largely follows that of the Church of England

References to Augustine's reasons for marriage removed, but with references to fidelity within marriage. Rings are given as tokens of love and fidelity. Priestly language is removed

After Marriage Reform Act - before the Deed of Union  
1890 1903 1913

1932

1936

1946

Deed of Union onwards  
1969-1975 1975

Both the Roman Catholic Church the Church of England review their Marriage Rites to reflect the modernisation of society. These changes also influence ecumenically

In response to early 20th Century attitudes: asserts marriage as a divine institution; recognises differences between couples where both are Christian and where there is a mixture of Christian and non-Christian

The language of the service becomes more egalitarian, reflecting the changing role and status of women.

Union

"The Order of Service for the Solemnization of Matrimony" is produced, based significantly on the Wesleyan form, but continuing the United Methodist Free trend of greater gender equality

The Conference produces "A Methodist Statement on the Law of Marriage and Divorce" permitting a Methodist who was previously married to marry again if they were the 'innocent party' in the divorce. (In 'oversees' Districts this had applied since 1935)

Methodist Marriage Service 1975 including: recognition of interfaith marriage, Christian/non-Christian marriage; language around procreation changed, recognising that not all married couples will have children; introduction of a prayer of confession; modernised language.

The Primitive Marriage Service moves closer in form to that of John Wesley's form of 1786

Deed of Union onwards

1992

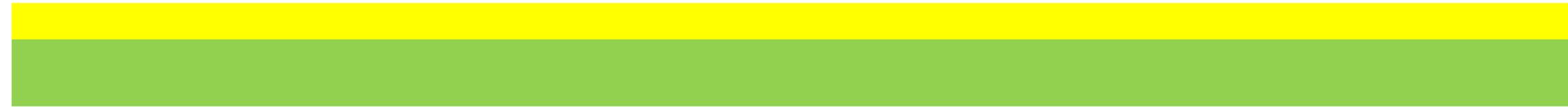
1993

1998

1999

2006

2014



<p>Conference agrees "A Methodist Statement on a Christian understanding of Family Life, the Single Person and Marriage"</p>	<p>Conference resolutions on Human Sexuality</p>	<p>Conference report 'Preparing for Marriage' - including 'recognising marriage as mutual between equals', restating the traditional aphorism of 'chastity before marriage, faithfulness within it', but recognising also that some Christians are unconvinced that the traditional aphorism adequately prepares human beings to grow in responsibility and moral discernment; moral maturity formed through inner decisions rather than externally enforced moral authority. Recognition that the boundaries between 'guilt' and 'innocence' in divorce are often unclear.</p>	<p>Marriage Service 1999, largely follows the 1975 order but with greater emphasis on contemporary attitudes to human relationships; greater equality of the sexes; brides not given away, but family and congregation asked to encourage the couple in their marriage; the 'legally required words' changed to reflect a change in the law; rings given with a blessing (traditionally associated with sacrament, but was introduced to reflect social attitudes)</p>	<p>Conference reaffirmed the 1993 Resolutions, and resolved that there is no reason, per se, why a Methodist may not form a Civil Partnership. No services of Blessing on Methodist premises, but appropriate pastoral responses encouraged</p>	<p>Conference encourages discussions across the Connexion on Marriage and relationships, and resolves that there is no reason, per se, why a Methodist may not enter a legally formed same sex marriage. The Methodist definition of marriage was not changed.</p>
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