

Historic, Liturgical, & Vibrant

BAPTIST WORSHIP IN THE
CHARLESTON
TRADITION

Rev. Dr. Justin Addington

Short History of the Baptist Faith

GENERAL BAPTISTS

Quaker-Like

General Baptists (cir. 1608), sometimes called Arminian Baptists, are Baptists that hold to the doctrine of General Atonement (belief that Jesus died for all). Key figure was Thomas Helwys (also John Smyth).

PARTICULAR BAPTISTS

Presebyterian-Like

Particular Baptists, also called Reformed Baptists, or Calvinist Baptists, are Baptists that hold to a belief that Jesus died only for a “particular” group of elect. Key figure was John Calvin.

SEPERATE BAPTISTS

Free Will-Like

The Separate Baptists are a group of Baptists originating in the 18th-century United States, primarily in the South, that grew out of the Great Awakening. Key Figure was George Whitefield.

Key Tenets of the Baptist Faith

01.

Priesthood of Believers

We believe in the priesthood of all believers and affirm the freedom and responsibility of every person to relate directly to God without the imposition of creed or the control of clergy or the government.

03.

Separation of Church & State

We believe in the freedom of religion, freedom for religion, and freedom from religion. We support the separation of church and state.

02.

Scriptural Authority

We believe in the authority of Scripture. We believe the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, is central to the life of the individual and the church. We affirm the freedom and right of every Christian to interpret and apply Scripture under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

04.

Congregational Autonomy

We believe in the autonomy of every local church. Baptist churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ, to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, to ordain whomever they perceive as gifted for ministry, and to participate as they deem appropriate in the larger body of Christ.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

- Robert Frost

Models of Baptist Worship

Charleston Tradition

- Originated in Charleston, SC in 1685
- From the General Baptists
- Ordered (*Yet no Order*)
- **Confession** of Faith (*2nd London/Philadelphia*)
- Education of Ministers
- Cooperation in Associational Life (*SBC*)
- Sang Psalms and Hymns of Isaac Watts, and other English Calvinists
- Worship led by clergy (*Master's Gown*)
- Focused on Scripture, Praise, and Prayer

“The Charlestonian style of worship represented a form that was ordered and stately, though pulsating with evangelical warmth. The ordinances were more important to these 18th century Baptists than to many of their successors. Worship appeared to be neither spontaneously charismatic nor primarily revivalistic. It was directed toward heaven, not earth. The object was to praise God, not entertain people.” – Buddy Shurden

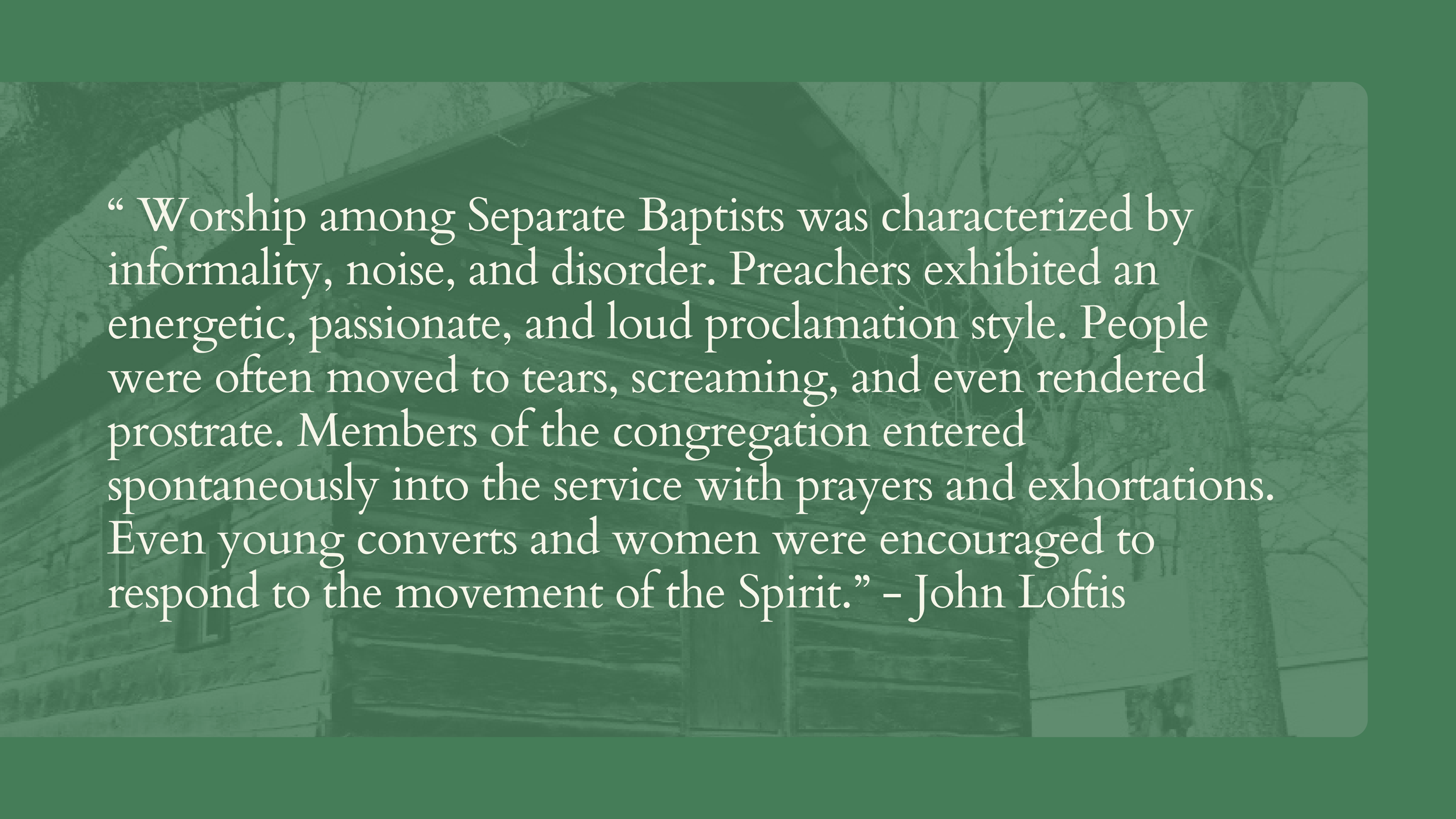
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Sandy Creek Tradition

- Originated in Sandy Creek, NC in 1755
- From the Separate Baptists
- Valued Disorder
- Required Called Preachers
- Education was Discouraged
- Lack of Association Birthed Free Will Baptists
- Sang Spirituals and Revival Songs taken from the frontier of America
- Worship Involved the Full Congregation
- Revivalistic/Evangelical in Tone



“Worship among Separate Baptists was characterized by informality, noise, and disorder. Preachers exhibited an energetic, passionate, and loud proclamation style. People were often moved to tears, screaming, and even rendered prostrate. Members of the congregation entered spontaneously into the service with prayers and exhortations. Even young converts and women were encouraged to respond to the movement of the Spirit.” – John Loftis

“Baptists emerged out of the English Reformation, and consequently have retained too much apathy toward things Roman and Anglican.”

Baptists in America followed the lead of their forbearers in England and tended to view the Lord’s Supper as a memorial meal which points to Jesus Christ.”

Rev. Dr. John M. Finley

from “Defining Baptist Convictions:
Worship Culminates in the Lords Supper”

Ordinance or Sacrament?

Baptists were guided by the reformers of the time. The Catholic view of *transubstantiation* (the meal as Christ’s actual body) was rejected. Luther’s view of *consubstantiation* (Christ’s presence in the meal) would have also been unacceptable. John Calvin’s view that Christ is present at the meal (Spiritually) was more appealing. John Smyth and other General Baptists used the term sacraments, however most Baptists were uncomfortable with any reference to the Supper (or baptism) as being a means of grace under the control of clergy.

Compare Worship Orders

PHILADELPHIA ORDER OF 1768

- Short Prayer
- Scripture
- Long Prayer
- Singing
- Preaching
- Third Prayer
- Singing
- Lord's Supper (*As Appointed*)
- Collecting Necessities
- Benediction

AMERICAN ORDER OF 1935

- Prayer
- Call to Worship
- Hymn
- Reading of Scriptures
- Hymn
- Pastoral Prayer
- Offering
- Sermon
- Prayer and Benediction
- Time of Silent Reflection

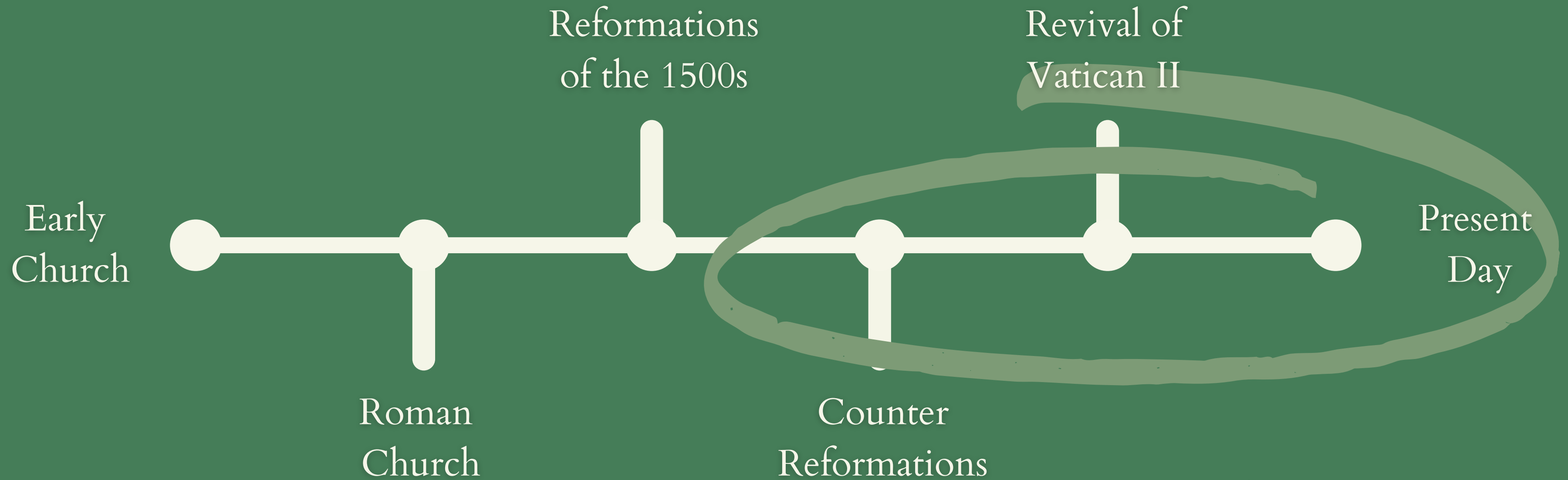
GENEVA ORDER OF 1542

- Call to Worship (*Psalm*)
- Metrical Hymn
- Prayer for Illumination
- Scripture Reading
- Sermon
- Collection
- Intercessions/Lord's Prayer
- Apostles' Creed
- Communion
- Benediction



“You just fold it in!”

Timeline of Christian Worship



Both forms continued to develop in their own ways but also moved closer to one another.

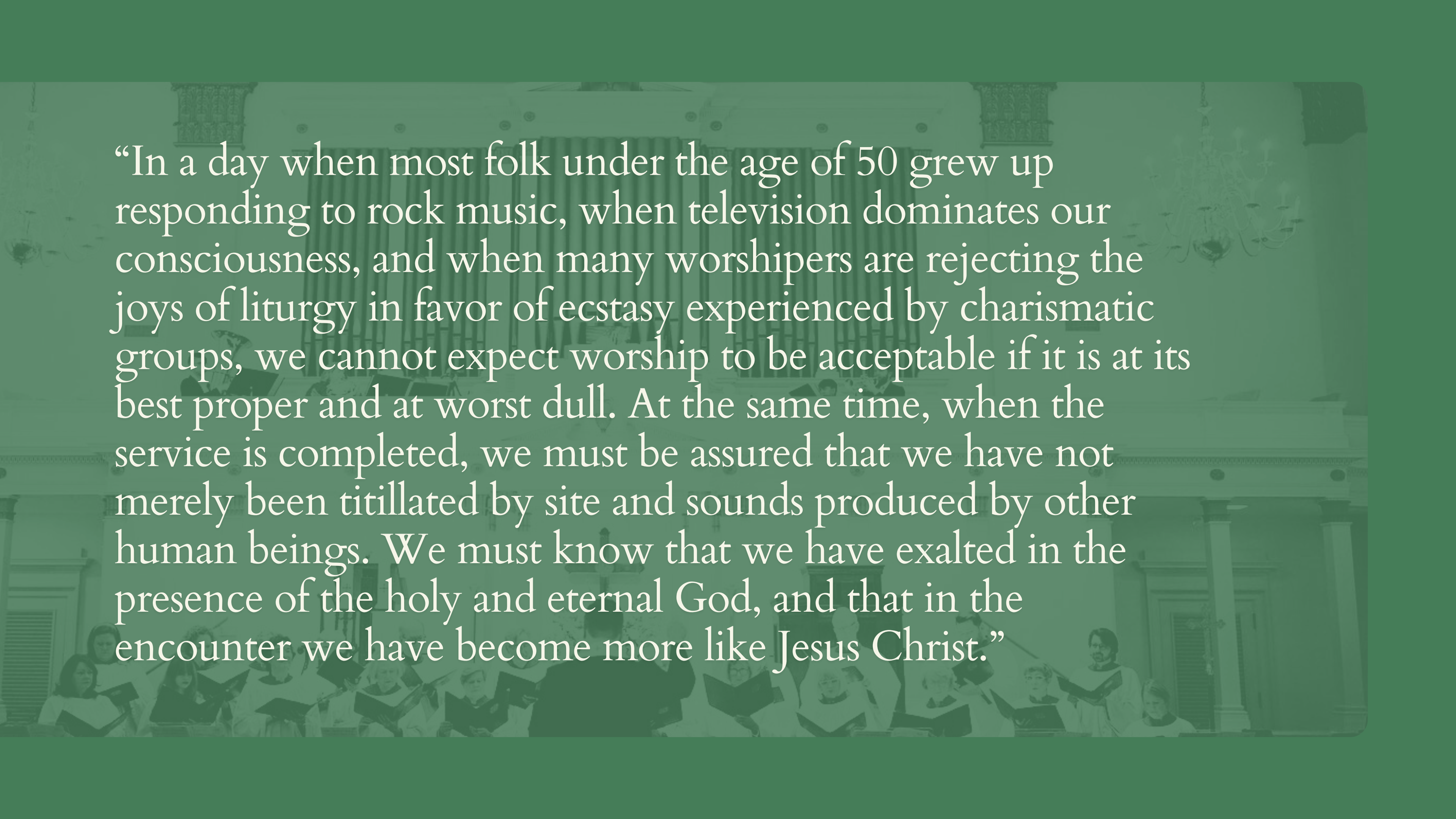
Explore how both traditions grew and borrowed from one another

- Charleston incorporated Invitations
- Sandy Creek now has calls to worship
- Some churches that were one thing are now another
- Sandy Creek became entertainment with lights and bands
- Charleston had to work not to be dull

Quotes by Don Hustad

“The Charleston order in its updated form provides the best opportunity for full-orbed Christian worship.”

“The day has passed when Charleston worship would be acceptable if it were proper and reverent. Nowadays, it would be called dull. Worship must include laughter, as well as contemplation, expressing exuberant joy, as well as awe.”

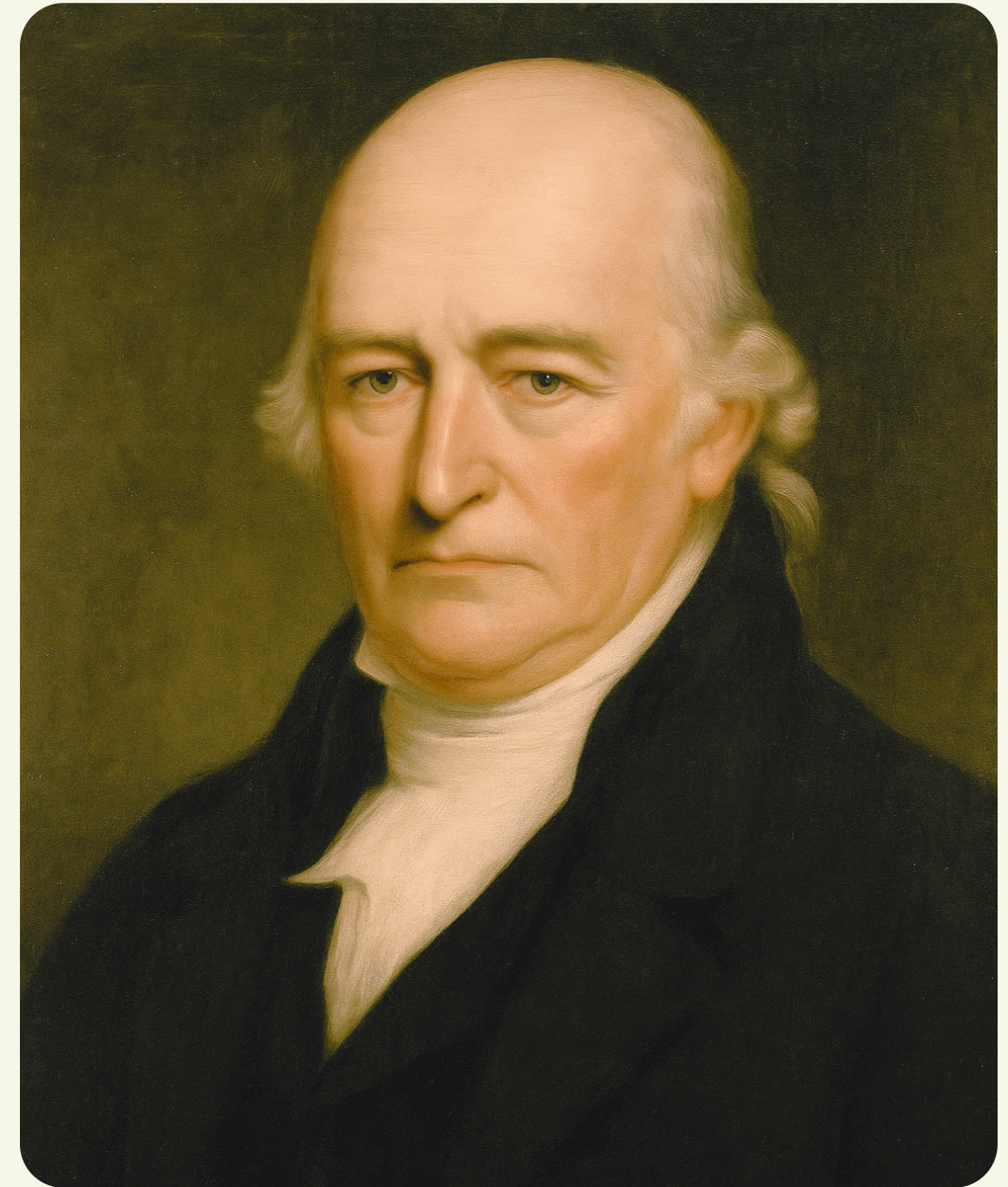
A photograph of a church interior, showing a choir of people singing from books. The scene is dimly lit, with a chandelier visible in the upper right. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

“In a day when most folk under the age of 50 grew up responding to rock music, when television dominates our consciousness, and when many worshipers are rejecting the joys of liturgy in favor of ecstasy experienced by charismatic groups, we cannot expect worship to be acceptable if it is at its best proper and at worst dull. At the same time, when the service is completed, we must be assured that we have not merely been titillated by site and sounds produced by other human beings. We must know that we have exalted in the presence of the holy and eternal God, and that in the encounter we have become more like Jesus Christ.”

What About Our Church?

“In our worship the cross and table have central place. Constants are the Apostles’ Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Gloria Patri and Doxology. The Charleston Tradition is a legacy that is characterized by order, unity, dignity, but also excitement, acceptance, and affection.”

- Rev. Dr. Tom Austin in 1988



Henry Holcombe, D.D.
(1762-1824)

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