Semper Reformanda

Ongoing Reform of the Church
Though the Peace of Westphalia stabilized the confessional boundaries in Europe, movements of reform continued within the established churches.
The Continental Context for Ongoing Reformation

- The failure of the *cuius regio illius religio* principle;
- The gradual encroachment of civil authorities into church life (state absolutism);
- Gallicanism vs. ultramontanism in France
- The confessionalization of reformation faiths;
- Emergence of scholasticism as the normative theological method;
- Lay patronage = the right of aristocratic civil authorities to make ecclesiastical appointments
- Developing belief: *ecclesia semper reformanda est* (“the church is always to be reformed”)
Pietism: Lutheran Revivalism

- “The protest of living faith against a lifeless and unbending orthodoxy” (Cragg)
- Spener’s Pia Desideria (1675)
- Basic theological worldview of Pietism
- The University of Halle (1694) as a center of Pietism
- New Protestant groups, utopian experimentation

Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) is considered to be the “father” of Pietism
Varieties of Pietism in Early Modern Europe

Refer to the chart
The Anglo-American Context for Ongoing Reformation

- The material prosperity of England and her North American colonies;
- Early industrialization and its attendant social problems (esp. poverty);
- “Anglicanization” of colonial New England and a sense of “declension” among church leaders;
- Dominance of rational religion in England (Deism, universalism, and latitudinarianism);
- Churches continued to be entangled in partisan politics (Anglicans = Tories; Non-conformists = Whigs)
With his brother, Charles, John Wesley (1703-1791) founded the Methodist movement in Britain.

- Critiques of the Church of England
- The Wesleyan theological worldview
- “Christian perfection”
- Itinerant preaching: “the world is my parish”
- Organizational development
- Early Methodism in colonial North America
English Revivalists Satirized

William Hogarth, “Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism,” (1761)

Unknown artist, “Dr. Squintum’s Exaltation, of the Reformation” (1763)
The Grand Itinerant: George Whitefield

“I am verily persuaded, the generality of preachers talk of an unknown, unfelt Christ. And the Reasons why congregations have been so dead, is because dead men preach to them.”

Sermon at Harvard College, 1740

Anglican revivalist George Whitefield (1714-1770) conducted seven preaching tours in England’s North American colonies.
The Great Awakening: 
North America

- Early stirrings of revival
- A “great and general awakening” (1740-1742)
- Conversion: “new birth”
- The spread of the awakening, esp. in the colonial South
- Controversy over revivalism
- The popular appeal of the Great Awakening

Presbyterian revivalist Gilbert Tennet (1703-1764) warned people about the “dangers of an unconverted ministry”
An Evangelical Apologist

- A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God (1737)
- The Distinguishing Marks of the Spirit of God (1741)
- Seasonable Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival (1742)
- A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections (1746)

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) was the leading apologist for the Great Awakening in colonial North America