

## OKTOBERFEST 2013 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2013

A. S. Salley Archives open for research.....	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Registration – Church of the Redeemer.....	4:00 – 5:45 PM
Family tables.....	4:00 – 5:45 PM
President’s Dinner (reservation required).....	6:00 PM
The Reverend Dr. Frank E. Larisy, Rector, Church of the Redeemer	
<i>The History of the Church of the Redeemer</i>	

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2013

Registration (coffee & pastries).....	8:30 AM
Annual Business Meeting	
Vote on by-laws change.....	9:00 AM
<i>Orangeburgh District DNA Report</i>	
Margaret Waters .....	9:30-9:45 AM
<i>First Families of Orangeburgh District</i>	
Pam Johnson.....	9:45-10:15 AM
<i>Faith on the Frontier: Religion and Community in Early Orangeburg</i>	
Lynn Teague.....	10:15-10:45 AM
Break .....	10:45-11:00 AM
<i>Some Sources for Vital Records in South Carolina</i>	
By Brent Holcomb.....	11:00-11:30 AM
<i>The Internet: Surfing for Genealogy.....Without Wiping Out</i>	
<i>Learn to read the waves of bad information and finish on top of your family history.</i>	
Eric Powell.....	11:30-12:00 PM
Lunch (*reservations required).....	12:00 PM-1:00PM
Family Tables.....	12:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Vendor Tables.....	9:30 AM – 3:00PM

(Some vendors may not be available for entire stated time)

\*Meal reservation deadline October 14, 2013,

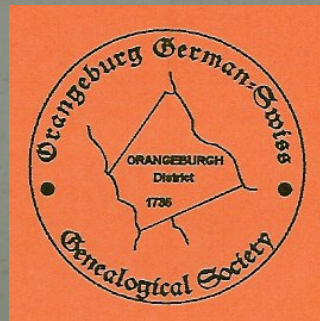
\*Note: program is subject to last minute additions and changes

Revised 08/25/2013

# Faith on the Frontier

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Religion in Early Orangeburgh District





# The Western Frontier

When the townships were established by the legislature in 1732, the colony of South Carolina had made no provisions for ministering to the scattered population throughout the backcountry. Most backcountry colonists before the founding of the townships were English speaking cattlemen and Indian traders who probably felt little need for spiritual guidance and support.

That changed when the townships brought family life and settled communities to the Carolina backcountry.

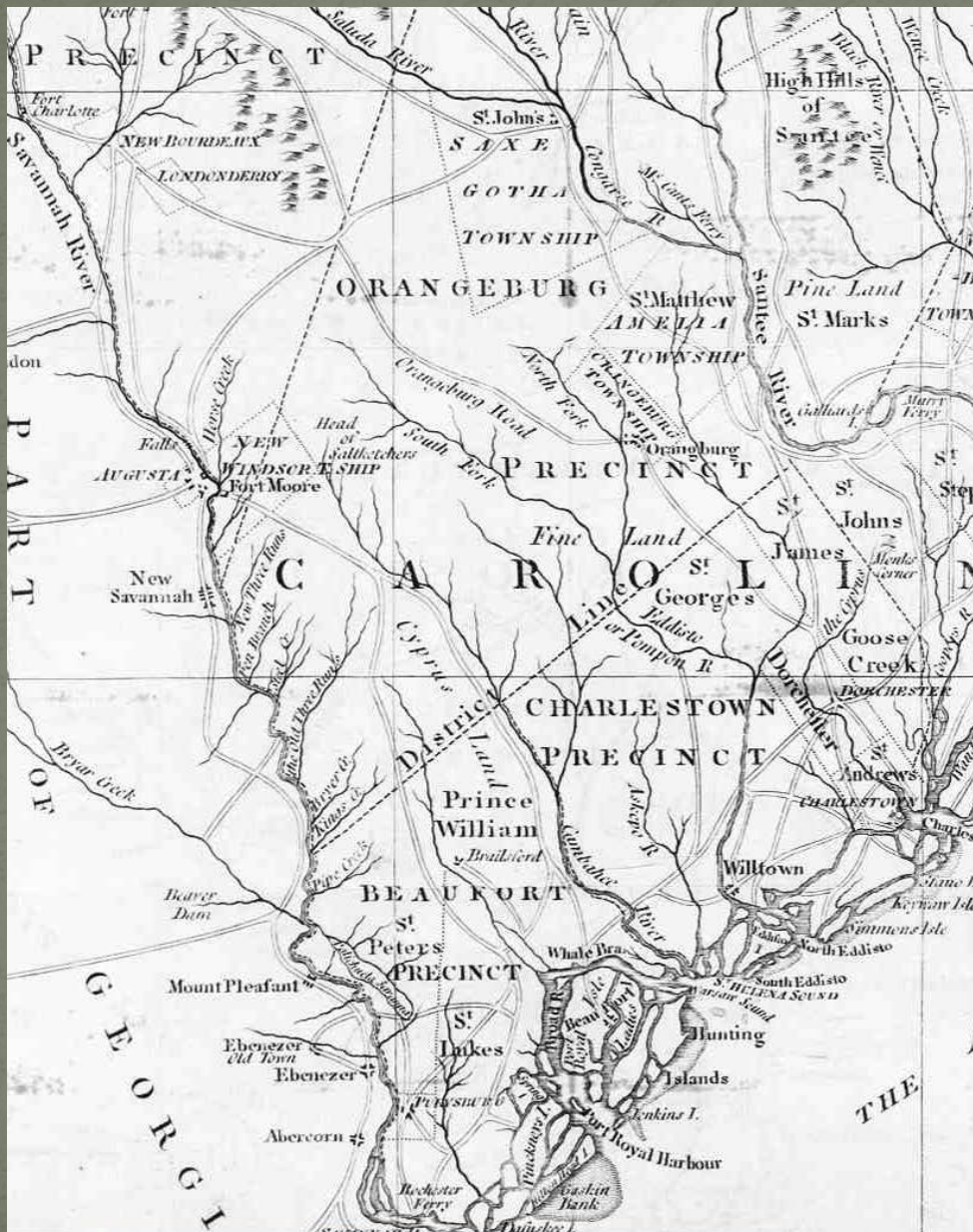


# Old Orangeburgh District

The colonists who were first recruited for the old Orangeburgh District were Swiss. Unlike the scattered traders of earlier years, they wanted the support of a regular minister and the services of their church.

South Carolina was a British colony in which the colonial government was closely associated with the Church of England, and its Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). Although they were responsible for ministering to the whole of the colony, their efforts were concentrated on the coast.





# The Western Townships

Swiss

Orangeburgh  
New Windsor  
Purrysburgh  
Saxe-Gotha

German

Saxe-Gotha

English

Amelia

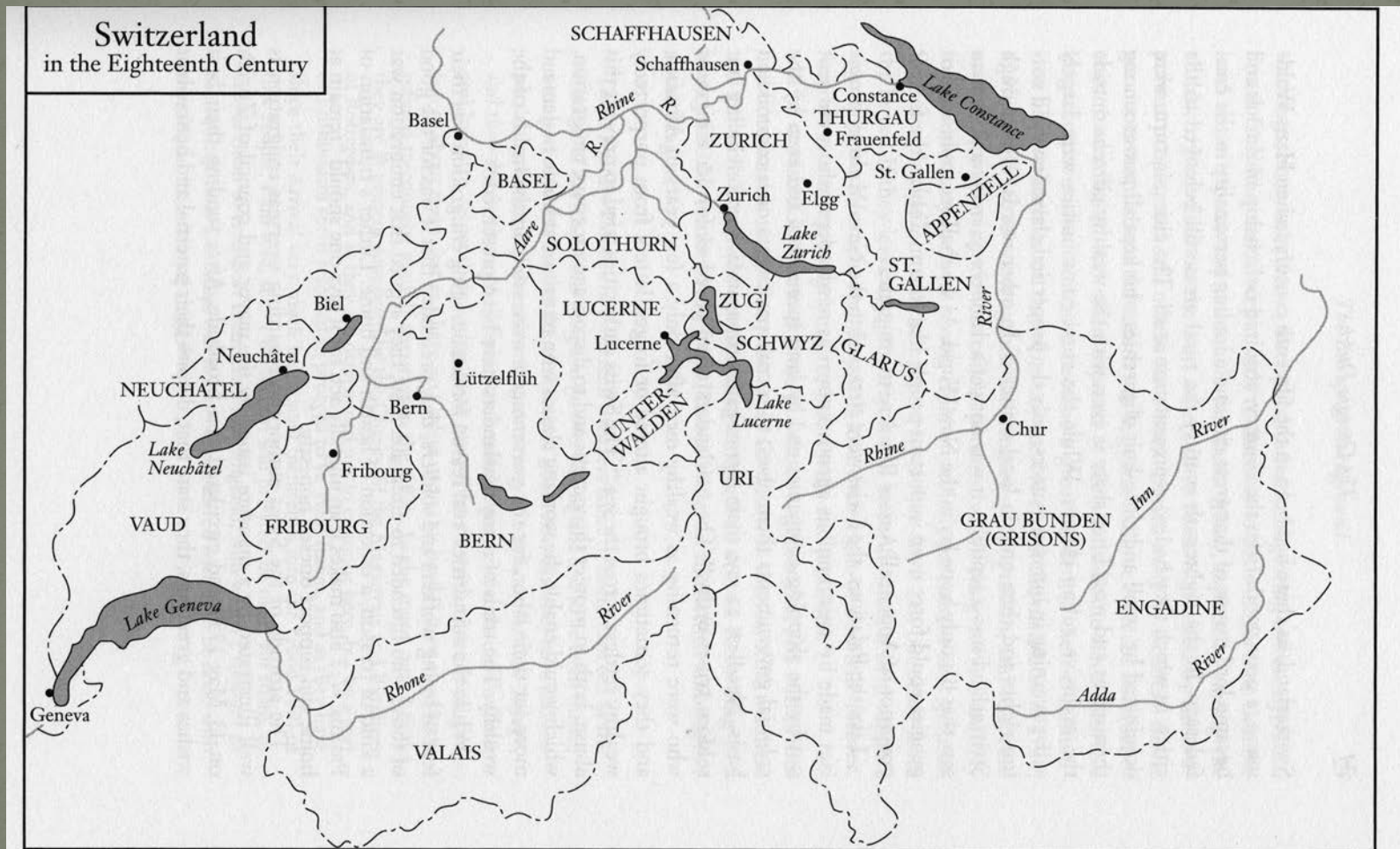


# Languages

- Most of the new settlers in the 1730's spoke dialects of German-Swiss. Some of these were difficult to understand, even for speakers of other German-Swiss dialects. Presumably there was some use of "High German." High German would have been more common among the immigrants from Baden-Württemberg and other German states who arrived later, beginning in about 1750.
- The Purrysburgh Township, founded in 1732, included a number of French-Swiss, and there was a scattering of Italian-speaking families including the Zaninis (later Jennings) and the Albergottis in the townships.



# The Swiss Homeland: Bern and the Rhine





# Education

- Most of the settlers had little education, and many were illiterate.
- However, a few had extensive education. The most conspicuous among these was Johannes Joachim Züblin from Appenzell Ausserrhodden, a settler in Purrysburg and a distinguished Calvinist theologian. We will speak more of him later.



# Some Major Christian Groups in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe

- Roman Catholic (still common in some Swiss cantons, SW Germany)
- Lutheran (most common denomination in Germany)
- Reformed (Swiss Reformed or *Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche*, German Reformed, Huguenot, Belgian Walloon, Scottish Presbyterian)
- Anabaptists (later Baptists; split from Calvinists over infant baptism)
- Anglican (Church of England and its offshoots, including Episcopal and Methodist)



# The Swiss Church

Swiss settlers in the Carolina townships followed the Reformed Church that dominated in portions of Switzerland and some nearby parts of Germany. This church was grounded in the theology of Huldrych Zwingli, a contemporary of Martin Luther (1484-1531). It grew out of the larger movement called the Reformation, as did other denominations without the word “reformed” in their names.

Zwingli, unlike Luther, rejected transubstantiation. John Calvin of Basel followed Zwingli. The churches that followed their ideas are associated with the “Reformed Tradition.” The theology is sometimes called Calvinist. Today the best known denomination in this tradition is Presbyterian, but historically the French Huguenots and Belgian Walloons were also Calvinist, along with the Swiss Reformed.



# Church and Politics in Switzerland

The Swiss Church was not “established” as the Church of England was. Because of the unique character of Swiss government, the church relationship was largely with the canton rather than the nation. Those relationships varied from close to quite distant, depending on the history of the canton. Some cantons (for example Fribourg, Appenzell Innherhoden) remained Catholic.

The New Windsor settlement was led by Johannes Tobler, who had been *Landeshauptmann* (similar to governor) of Appenzell Ausserhoden. He left because he was opposed to the use of the churches to raise troops for mercenary armies.

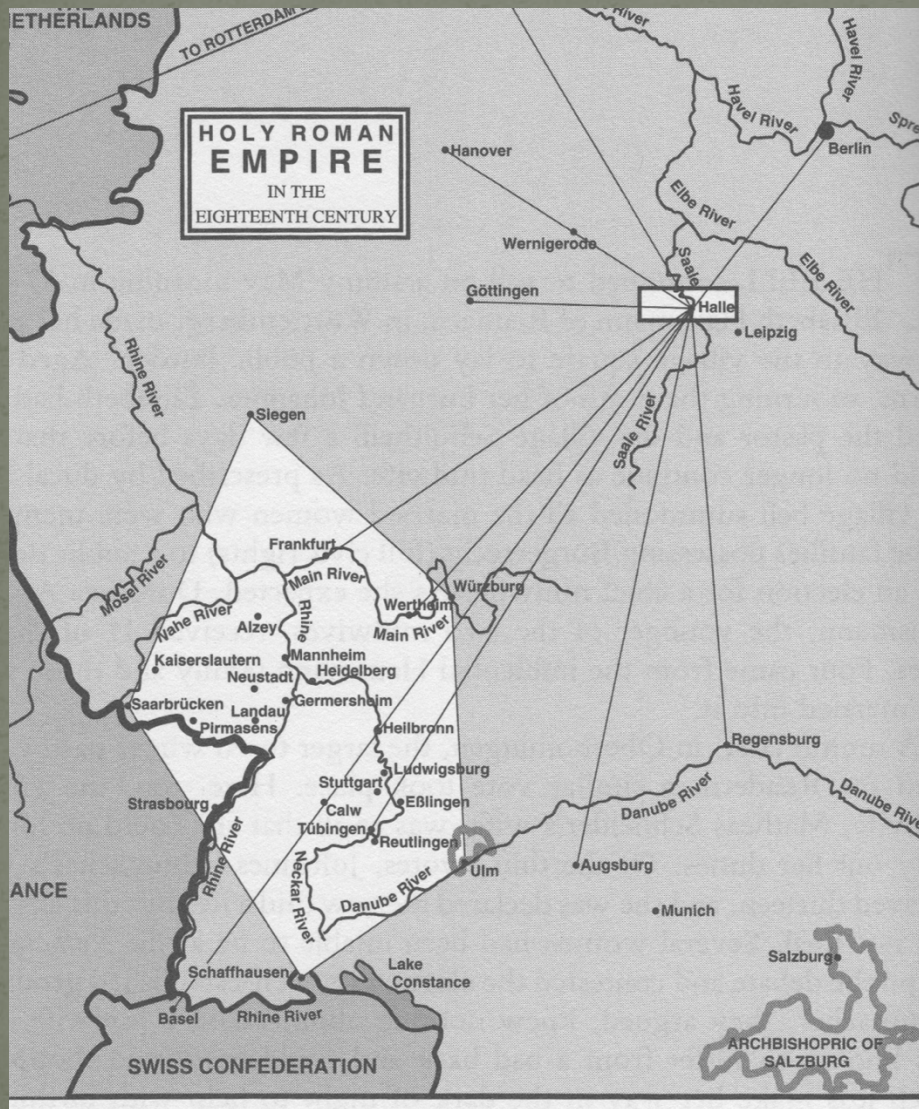


# The Churches in Germany

Southwestern Germany along the Rhine, the primary source of German immigration into South Carolina from about 1750 until the Revolution, was divided in religious affiliation. In some areas Roman Catholicism continued. The Reformed Church was strong in some villages and states, the Lutheran in others.

Some Orangeburgh Swiss families had spent years in Reformed communities in southwestern Germany and emigrated during the 1735-1737 settlement, while others from the same areas who were of German origin arrived in the 1750s and 1760s.





# Southwest Germany



# Denominations in South Carolina in 1750

- Church of England (the established church, the majority on the coast)
- Presbyterians (Waxhaws, PeeDee, and around Beaufort where there was Scottish settlement)
- Huguenot (almost all assimilated by 1750)
- Reformed (in the townships below the Santee and in Charleston)
- Lutherans at Saxe-Gotha (about 280) in a combined Lutheran-Reformed congregation.
- Society of Friends (many original settlers were Quakers)
- Various unaffiliated Congregationalist and Baptist groups



# The Orangeburgh Families

Alexander S. Salley, Jr., wrote in his *History of Orangeburg* that the Swiss settlers were Lutheran, but this was an error. Most Carolina historians have not known German and found it easy to conflate Swiss and later German settlers. A few truly Lutheran settlers from Germany were in Saxe-Gotha.

When the origins of Orangeburgh families have been traced to a Swiss parish, their records are invariably in Swiss Reformed parishes.



# The First Orangeburgh Minister

The Orangeburg settlers asked Hans Ulrich Giessendanner, a silver and goldsmith from Toggenburg (now part of Appenzell Ausserrhoden) in northwest Switzerland, to become their minister.

Giessendanner had emigrated with the group from Appenzell Ausserrhoden and St. Gallen that founded Purrysburgh. However, he had a falling-out with that group and settled instead in Charleston to pursue his trade.



Giessendanner was not ordained in any denomination, although he had sought ordination in the Swiss Reformed Church and in the Reformed Church in southwestern Germany.

However, Giessendanner was not an “orthodox” member of the Reformed Church. He was a Pietist, a follower of a movement that combined the Lutheranism of the time with the Reformed emphasis on personal piety.

Giessendanner was a “teacher” rather than an ordained minister of Pietism. There is evidence that he believed in direct illumination in dreams and in instruction by angels.



# Giessendanner in Switzerland

Giessendanner also was allied with the even more radical “Inspirationists” who believed that the Holy Spirit gave them direct revelations, often accompanied by physical contortions and vocal outbursts. This suggests that his personal faith had something in common with modern Pentecostalism, although it was far removed from the historical roots of modern Pentecostalism.

Some of the Orangeburgh settlers may have shared Giessendanner’s perspective, but we have no evidence of that.

This theological blend was not unique to the Swiss settlers in South Carolina at the time. It has been argued that Henry Laurens, Charleston slave trader and Revolutionary War era leader, displayed a religion that was “a mixture of Calvinism and Pietism, with a touch of revivalism.”



# Giessendanner in Germany

In Switzerland Giessendanner was regarded as disruptive and was even banned from St. Gallen and from Zurich.

He went on to Germany, where he experienced extreme rejection, even by local Pietists. He was accused of “taking God’s honor for himself.”

He returned to Switzerland. Ten years later a traveling Pietist minister wrote that he believed that Giessendanner had been treated very unfairly, and was a man of integrity and sound faith.

Eventually Giessendanner resumed preaching, but local church authorities reacted badly. Giessendanner emigrated, leaving for Carolina with the Purrysburgh colonists.



# A Backcountry Calling

After separating from the Purrysburgh group, Hans Ulrich Giessendanner settled in Charlesotn, but in 1737 the Orangeburgh settlers asked him to come inland and minister to them. He agreed.

As he began his ministry, he also began the parish records that today are a treasured and indispensable document of our family and community histories.



# A New Minister:

## Rev. John Giessendanner

After only a year, Hans Ulrich Giessendanner died. The congregation asked his nephew, John Giessendanner, to assume his duties. John Giessendanner consulted Major Christian Motte, a liason to the township and a member of a Huguenot family, for advice.

Motte, a Calvinist himself, realized that the denomination active in the colony that was most consistent with the younger Giessendanner's Reformed theology was Presbyterian.



# Presbyterian Ordination

John Giessendanner subsequently was ordained by the Presbyterian Assembly in Charleston. Alexander Salley, in his History, treats Motte's advice and Giessendanner's subsequent license to preach through the Presbyterians as a mistake, suggesting that Motte did not properly understand Giessendanner's religious background. It was not an error. Motte was correct in his theological understanding of the Swiss settlers.

The Rev. John Giessendanner was born in 1721. And so, he was 18 years old when he was examined by the Presbyterians in Charleston and assumed the duties of minister to the people of Orangeburgh Township.



# Frontier Morality

Some were not happy with the Rev. Giessendanner's firm stance against drunkenness and other popular frontier pastimes. In 1743 Bartholomew Zouberbuhler, Jr., a candidate for Church of England orders from New Windsor Township, petitioned the Council to displace Giessendanner.

However John Hearn "and above four score of the Dutch and English Inhabitants of Orangeburg and the adjoining plantations" sent an indignant protest to the governor, praising Giessendanner and declaring that Zouberbuhler was being encouraged by residents exasperated by public reprimands for "great Irregularities and Disorders on the Sabbath."



In the petition in his defense, John Giessendanner was described as “a man of learning, piety, and knowledge in the Holy Scriptures, . . . Very articulate and intelligible . . . And always behaves himself with sobriety, honesty, and justice, encouraging virtue and reproofing vice. (MS, Records of Governor and council, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1743, State Archives, Columbia).

The Rev. Giessendanner remained in Orangeburgh to preach against the disruptive and ungodly, with the approval of many of his congregation.



# The Church of England

In 1749 Orangeburg settlers petitioned the Council and Rev. John Giessendanner went to England to be ordained in the Church of England by the Bishop of London. In their petition, the Orangeburghers said that they were “under the expectation of Enjoying the same Priviledges and Imunitys in Society which their Fellow Subjects do Enjoy have at all time Willingly and Chearfully contributed their assistance toward the Support and preservation of the Government . . . .”

Governor Glenn, in his letter to the Bishop of London, said that “Though bred a Calvinist, he is . . . Going to England for Orders.”



# The Church of England

In short, the Orangeburgh settlers had paid their taxes for years to maintain the colony and its ministers and wanted the legal privileges of a full citizen, which were available to members of the established church, as well as the return of some of their tax money in pay for their minister.

They were not the first Carolinians in the Reformed tradition to follow expediency in their religious affiliation. In 1706 the Church of England became the established church in South Carolina. Very quickly, Huguenot congregations officially entered the established church “securing to themselves the obvious political and legal benefits of conformity.”



# The Reformed Church in America

Although Rev. Giessendanner and his congregation did not continue in the Reformed tradition, there is an off-shoot of the Reformed Church in the United States today. It is the Reformed Church in America. It traces its history to the 1628 founding of Marble Collegiate Protestant Dutch Reformed Church in New York City, once led by the Rev. Norman Vincent Peale. The RCA is the oldest denomination in North America with a continuing ministry.

No congregations exist today in South Carolina. The nearest that has been identified is the First Reformed Church of Cary in North Carolina.



# The Rev. Johann Joachim Züblin

The Swiss left a theological legacy elsewhere in the larger region. The Rev. John Zubly was one of the Purrysburgh Township settlers, the son-in-law of Orangeburgh settler Ulrich Tobler and cousin of the Förster family of Orangeburgh. He was educated in Europe in theology and languages and licensed to preach by the German [Reformed] Church in London. He is regarded as one of the foremost Calvinist theologians of the British colonies. There are reports, unsubstantiated but believable, that he sometimes preached before the congregation at Amelia or the Four Holes. Rev. Zubly founded the First Presbyterian Church in Savannah and in this way left a surviving trace of the Swiss faith.



# The Church and the Backcountry

In about 1760 Rev. John Giessendanner's health deteriorated, and he died in 1761. No evidence has been found of any effort by the Church of England to replace him. The colonial leaders in Charles Towne were generally uninterested in providing the services of either church or courts to the settlers of the Townships. This gave rise to the Regulator Movement. That is a different major topic, for another day.

In the Waxhaws along the North Carolina border, Rev. Charles Woodmason was the lone itinerant Church of England minister to the scattered settlements there before the Revolution. Below the Santee almost all ministry was by Swiss Reformed ministers.



# Rev. Samuel Suther

Rev. Samuel Suther ministered to the people of Orangeburgh Township for several years after Rev. John Giessendanner's death. Rev. Suther was a Swiss Reformed minister who had immigrated into Virginia and travelled south. He eventually moved into North Carolina and was instrumental in establishing the Presbyterian Church there.



# The German Lutherans Arrive

Following 1750, Lutheran settlers from the German states began to arrive in South Carolina and specifically in the Orangeburgh District. They settled most densely in what is now Lexington County, although some put down roots in what are now Orangeburg and Calhoun counties.

The Mother Church of the Lutherans in South Carolina was St. John's in Charleston. It was founded in 1755 by The Rev. George Friederich.



# Orangeburgh Surnames at St. John's

At St. John's numerous Orangeburgh surnames are found in the parish register. These were Swiss and English in origin as well as German. They include:

- Frederic
- Kemmerlin
- Meyers
- Pendarvis
- Sandel
- Syfrett
- Walz
- Wannamaker
- Weiss
- Yonn
- Weber
- Zimmerman



This is not surprising. In this and other instances, the common language seems to have outweighed doctrinal differences.

We have already mentioned the mixed Reformed-Lutheran settlement at Saxe-Gotha. In some locations, Roman Catholics also mixed with Lutheran congregations. Bernheim states that this was true in Charleston (although Bernheim was sometimes not well informed). At Ebenezer, on the Savannah across from New Windsor, Boltzius required conversion to the Lutheran denomination before ministering to anyone who had been Roman Catholic.



# The Late Colonial Religious Landscape

Voigt, in his study of religious conditions among German-speaking congregations in South Carolina between 1732 and 1774, observed that if we were to judge the German-Swiss and Germans by certain contemporary statements and incidents, the picture is not a pretty one.

Pastor Boltzius of Ebenezer, GA, denounced the people of Saxe-Gotha as filthy, spiritually wretched, and split into contending Reformed and Lutheran factions. He said that many migrated from other colonies where they had been unsuccessful. He indicated that some of them were unwilling to work, and some were horse and cattle thieves.



# The Weberite Heresy

Orangeburgh escaped the worst of the theological errors of the backcountry. It was in Saxe-Gotha that the Weberite Heresy took root. In 1761 Jacob Weber began to preach “out of his spirit” and neighbors considered him divinely inspired. Two others also claimed divine revelations and the three set themselves up as the Holy Trinity:

- Weber, God the Father
- Schmidt Peter, God the Son
- “a godless colored preacher” God the Holy Spirit



The Weberites gained followers, some through terrorism. They went about nude and practiced “extreme wantonness.” They were rebuked by Pastor Christian Theus, and in retribution they tried to drown him in the Congaree. He escaped with the help of a boatman.

This unholy Trinity quarreled among themselves, and the others joined together to suffocate the Holy Spirit. Then Weber turned on Schmidt Peter (God the Son) and denounced him as Satan. They beat him and trampled him to death. They also killed another individual, Michael Hans. Weber and others were tried for murder.



Before this disruption the Weberite sect spread as far north as Maryland.

The problems in German-speaking South Carolina were not unique. Similar problems occurred in other colonies (including the delusions of being God) and in non-German congregations. The Rev. Charles Woodmason described some of those who interrupted his service in the Waxhaws as “the worst vermin on earth.”

Basically, the colonial governments were tolerant of a wide range of irregularities in frontier settlements, intervening in only the most obvious cases.



# Amelia (St. Matthews) and Orangeburg on the eve of the Revolution

With the departure of Samuel Suther in the mid-1760's, both Orangeburg and Amelia were left without ordained clergy. In 1767 T. Griffiths found in Orangeburgh only a tavern, a store, "and a man that pretended to preach."

In 1764 the House of Commons was petitioned by a group of Amelia inhabitants to make provision for a minister there. In 1765 the Orangeburghers also asked that their township be made a parish. The House responded by creating a parish consisting of the two townships and areas below Amelia. However, this was vetoed by the Crown because it would have added two members to the House of Commons.



# St. Matthews Parish

In 1768 St. Matthews became a parish with only one seat in the House (taken from St. James Goose Creek). Provision also was made for a chapel, and that was established at what is now Chapel Creek on the north side of the town of Santee.

The Rev. Paul Turquand ministered in Amelia Township (St. Matthews) until the Revolution, maintaining the only continuing presence of the Church of England in the area. Some of his church records survive. There is no record of his ministering to the people of the Orangeburgh area, as Giessendanner had ministered to the people of Amelia.



# Churches – Few and Far Between

For all practical purposes, what became Orangeburg County was without educated and ordained clergy leading active churches from the Revolution until the Great Awakening. Blessed by wonderful parish records from the Giessendanner years, we are left with a substantial gap of decades before regular church services became the norm again in Orangeburgh.

Eventually brush arbor churches and camp meeting locations were established in the late 1700's and early 1800's, many eventually growing into established Methodist and Baptist congregations.



# During and After the Revolution

The Constitution of 1778 permitted congregations other than the Church of England to apply for incorporation. In 1788 inland German-speaking congregations banded together as the “The Ecclesiastical Union of the Several German Protestant Congregations Dispersed Abroad in the Back Parts of the State of South Carolina.” They petitioned to establish 15 congregations. Most were in the areas settled by Germans and were, accordingly, identified as German Lutheran. There were a few remnants of the Swiss Reformed Tradition but of the ministers named in the petition only Christian Theus was Reformed; all others were Lutheran.



# The New Congregations

The new congregations in Orangeburgh District, primarily in what is now Lexington County, included:

- The Frederician Church on Cattle's Creek
- The German Calvinistic Church of St. John on the Fourhole
- The German Lutheran Church of St. Matthew in Amelia [Township]
- The German Lutheran Church of Salem on Sandy Run
- The German Lutheran Church of Mount Zion on 12 Mile Creek
- The German Lutheran Church of St. Peter on 18 Mile Creek
- The German Lutheran Church of Bethel on High Hill Creek
- The German Lutheran Church of St. Martin
- The German Lutheran Church of Bethlehem on Foustsford.

In Charleston District one new church was formed:

- The Protestant Church of St. George's on Indian Field Swamp

Five additional German-speaking churches were begun in Camden and Ninety Six Districts.



# The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

St. Matthews Lutheran Church at Cameron survived from among the congregations established by the petition of German-speaking congregations in 1788.

White House United Methodist Church is the earliest surviving Orangeburg County Methodist Church; it was established in 1790. Calvinism reappeared with the creation of a Presbyterian church in Orangeburg in 1835. The Church of the Redeemer was established by the Episcopal Church in 1851. In 1860 a Baptist congregation was officially established in the city of Orangeburg; other rural congregations were older.



## OKTOBERFEST SURVEY 2013

1. Have you attended Oktoberfest before?
2. What do you like best about Oktoberfest?
3. What do you like least about Oktoberfest?
4. Were the speakers interesting and informative?
5. What kind of speakers would you like to have?
6. Were the meals satisfactory?
7. Were the vendors satisfactory?
8. Were the family tables satisfactory?
9. Was the venue satisfactory?
10. Would you like to see more tours? If so what type? If not what kind of activities would you like to see at Oktoberfest next year?
11. Are you interested in volunteering to help next year?
12. Are you interested in volunteering for a committee?
13. Please give us your comments, suggestions and concerns below.

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY  
PLEASE PLACE IN SURVEY BOX AT REGISTRATION TABLE BEFORE  
LEAVING**



## ABOUT US



### **The Orangeburgh German-Swiss Genealogical Society**

Our Society is a family history organization which promotes the collection and preservation of early records of the people of Orangeburgh Township, South Carolina, and their descendants. It is an eleemosynary, non-profit, non-political, and non-sectarian.

Other objectives are to serve, through publications and meetings, as a medium of exchange of Orangeburgh genealogical information; to acquaint members with available sources of genealogical materials; and to enjoy the fun and fellowship of sharing records and research.

Membership is open to all who are interested in Orangeburgh genealogy, professional or amateur, and who are interested in supporting the objectives of the Society.

Individual membership is \$18.00 per calendar year, or \$24.00 for two or more members residing at the same address. Life memberships, both Individual and Family are also available. (See application for life membership prices which vary with age of applicant)

All OGS GS Members receive the OGS GS Newsletter published four times per year. The newsletter covers such topics as: ancestry charts, family group sheets, family bibles, cemeteries, personal diaries, queries, book reviews, courthouse records, surname lists, surveys, memorials, plats, deeds, etc.

OGSGS Members also have access to the OGS GS Archives, the Society's Collection of printed and manuscript material. This collection was donated to the A. S. Salley Archives in 2009 and has been incorporated into the archives collection. All materials are stamped and acknowledged as OGS GS donation.

All OGS GS Members receive a personal invitation to OKTOBERFEST, our annual meeting of the membership. It is a yearly celebration in Orangeburg when researchers come together to share sources of genealogical materials and have fun.

If you share our goals and are interested in genealogical research in the Orangeburgh area we invite you to join our Society today by filling out our membership application located on the website [www.ogsgs.org](http://www.ogsgs.org).

**OKTOBERFEST SPECIAL FOR NEW MEMBERS ONLY**

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