Religion and the War

The south is conventionally viewed as the more religious region, and Davis the religious president. (Did Lincoln believe in a God?) Many religious groups divided over slavery and the war, helping further divide the nation and helping bring the war. Even though many Americans were not church-goers, almost all were religiously literate to some extent, and had at least nominal attachment to some faith. Confederates had a Revival in 1864 – but so did the Union armies in the west. In this war, we see the first Jewish Chaplains and the first real delineation of the duties of chaplains.

Outline

I. Religion in Ante-Bellum America
   A. The Main Denominations – a Protestant America
   B. The Multiplication of Sects in the Second Great Awakening
   C. Other Major Movements/Issues of the Period
   D. How Religious was America in 1860?

II. The Churches on Slavery
   A. The Regional Division in Protestant Denominations
   B. Catholicism

III. The Position of Minority Denominations and Sects, North & South
   A. Catholics
   B. Jews
   C. Minor Protestant Denominations (e.g., Lutherans)

IV. Lincoln’s Faith

V. Faith and Revivals in the Armies
   A. Confederate Armies
   B. Union Armies

VI. Chaplains
   A. Requirements, Status, and Duties (common to both sides)
   B. Catholic and Jewish Chaplains
   C. Examples of Good Chaplains and Not-so-good Chaplains

Good Readings:

Steven Wentworth, *While God is Marching On: The religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (UP Kansas, 2001)
Mark Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (UNC, 2006)
Ben Wright and Zachary Dresser, eds., *Apocalypse and the Millennium in the American Civil War* (Louisiana SUP, 2013)
Paul Harvey, *Freedom’s Coming: Religious Culture and the Shaping of the South from the Civil

Course Web Site: http://personal2.stthomas.edu/jcfitzharris/CivilWar/
War to the Civil Rights Era (UNC, 2007)
Mary Maher, *To Bind Up the Wounds: Catholic Sister Nurses in the U.S. Civil War* (Louisiana SUP, 1999)
Harry Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War* (Arco, 1963)

Course Web Site: http://personal2.stthomas.edu/jcfitzharris/CivilWar/