



## Telling Our Stories

250 Years of United Methodism  
in the New York Area

1766-2016

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# Phoebe Worrall Palmer

*Prophetess of the  
Holiness Movement*

**1807-1874**



The Holiness Movement was one of the most significant Protestant movements in the 19th century. It promoted John Wesley's teaching that believers can achieve entire sanctification or perfection in this life (i.e. living a sinless life of active love). Palmer's twist was that it could be achieved instantaneously through belief.

A New York native, Phoebe Palmer became the movement's prophetess after her sanctification experience in 1837. She provided the fuel for the movement with countless lectures, articles, ten books, and her widely read monthly periodical "Guide to Holiness."

Palmer believed that holiness needed to translate into Social Action, and she was instrumental in persuading the Ladies' Home Missionary Society to create New York's Five Points Mission in 1850.

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## (Phoebe Palmer, cont.)

For 37 years, Palmer held the “Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness” in her NYC home, drawing prominent leaders from all walks of life including Methodist bishops and educators. Palmer wrote of these meetings, “How small do all merely earthly distinctions appear, when brought under the equalizing influences of pure, perfect love!” Palmer published summaries of these meetings for all to follow her activities. She became a religious phenomenon... a Rock (of Ages) Star!

### *For Discussion*

- Do you believe that entire sanctification (perfection in life) can be achieved before death?
- Is the Holiness Movement still influencing United Methodism today?
- Phoebe’s Tuesday meetings brought leaders from all walks of life together. What leaders do you see doing this in your community?
- Would it be possible today for a United Methodist lay person to rise to the level of prominence that Phoebe Palmer did?



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