

## CHARLES, DAVID, I (1762 - 1834), Calvinistic Methodist minister, and hymn-writer

**Name:** David Charles  
**Date of birth:** 1762  
**Date of death:** 1834  
**Spouse:** Sarah Charles (née Phillips)  
**Child:** Sarah Hughes (née Charles)  
**Child:** Eliza Davies (née Charles)  
**Child:** David Charles  
**Parent:** Jael Charles (née Bowen)  
**Parent:** Rees Charles  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Calvinistic Methodist minister, and hymn-writer  
**Area of activity:** Literature and Writing; Music; Poetry; Religion  
**Author:** Gomer Morgan Roberts

Born 11 October 1762 at Pant-dwfn, Llanfihangel Abercowin, Carmarthenshire, son of Rees and Jael Charles and brother of [Thomas Charles](#). He was apprenticed to a flax-dresser and rope-maker at Carmarthen, and spent some time in Bristol learning his craft. He learned by heart Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* while still a mere boy and was converted through reading the sermons of Ralph Erskine. Returning to Carmarthen to follow his trade, he married Sarah, the daughter of [Samuel Levi Phillips](#), a banker (and a Christianized Jew) of Haverfordwest. He joined the Methodist congregation in Water Street, and was elected elder. He soon became one of the outstanding Methodist leaders in South Wales and took a prominent part in establishing the Home Mission and drawing up the *Cyffes Ffydd* (confession of faith of the denomination). He began to preach in 1808 and administered the sacrament of baptism before he was ordained in the first Association for ordaining Methodist ministers held at Llandilo in 1811. He was one of the principal antagonists of the rule of [Nathaniel Rowland](#) in the Methodist denomination. In 1828 he had a seizure, and was an invalid for the rest of his life. He died 2 September 1834 and was buried in Llangynnor.

He was regarded as a clear thinker and an able theologian. His published sermons reveal an epigrammatic style and close-knit reasoning. [Hugh Hughes](#) (1790 - 1863), his son-in-law, published the following works by him: *Deg a Thri Ugain o Bregethau, ynghyd ag Ychydig Emynau* (thirty sermons and a few hymns) (Chester, 1840); a volume of English *Sermons*, etc. (London, 1846); and again *Pregethau*, etc. (Wrexham, 1860). In 1879 *Detholion o Ysgrifeniadau* (a selection of his works) was published at Wrexham. His hymns were published in the small collections of the period, e.g. *Anthem y Saint... gan Evan Dafydd* (Carmarthen, 1807); *Hymnau ar Amrywiol Achosion* (Carmarthen, 1823), etc. His eminence as a hymn writer is assured, and his greatest hymns are to be found in all the Welsh hymnbooks.

### Author

Reverend Gomer Morgan Roberts, (1904 - 1993)

## Sources

Hugh Hughes, *Sermons by the late Rev. David Charles ... translated from the Welsh, with a memoir* (London 1846)

*Y Drysorfa*, 1847, 129, 161, 193

D. E. Jenkins, *Life of Thomas Charles* (Denbigh 1908)

*Y Traethodydd*, 1934, 210-7

J. Thickens, *Emynau a'u Hawduriaid* (1945), 23-7

## Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [David Charles](#)

## Images

Maclure, Macdonald and Macgregor, [Y Parch. David Charles Caerfyrddin](#)

## Additional Links

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