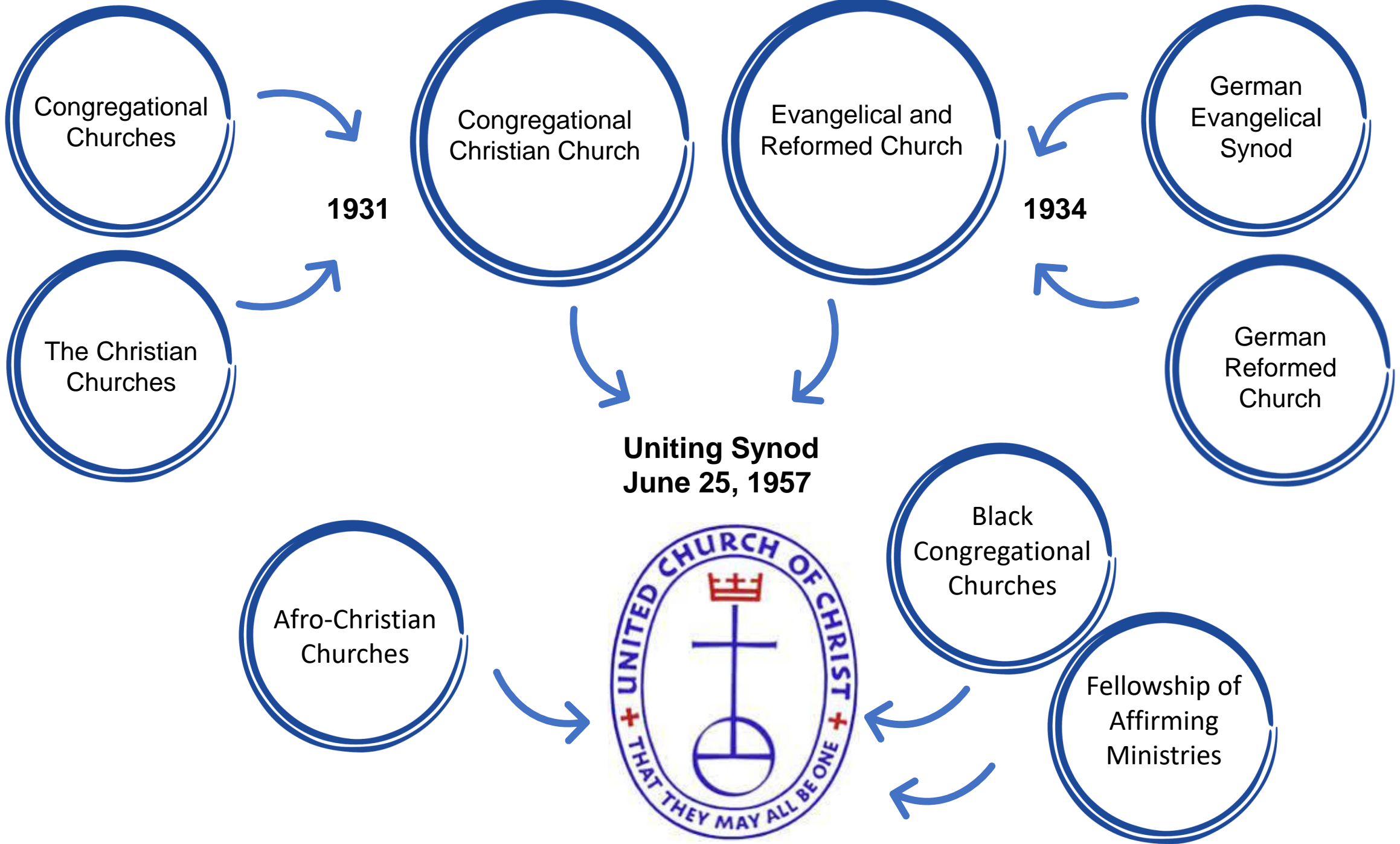




History,
Polity, and
Theology of
the United
Church of
Christ

A Place Like This





UCC Purpose, Vision and Mission

Purpose Statement (from the Gospel of Matthew):

To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

Vision Statement:

United in Christ's love, a just world for all.

Mission statement:

United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.

Core Features of the United Church of Christ

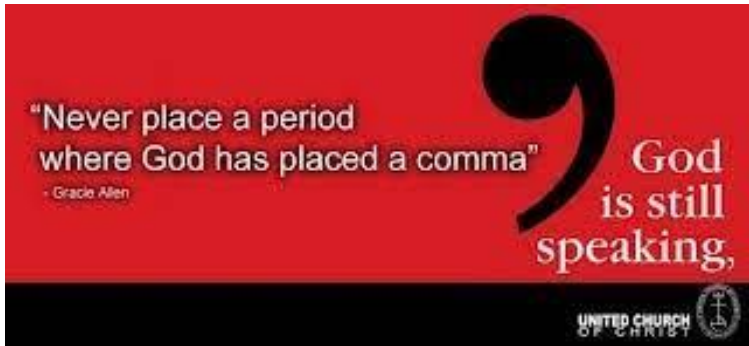
Covenantal: Speaking to and not for

"Within the United Church of Christ, the various expressions of the church relate to each other in a *covenantal manner*. Each expression of the church has *responsibilities and rights* in relation to the others, to the end that the whole church will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission. Decisions are made in *consultation and collaboration* among the various parts of the structure. As members of the Body of Christ, each expression of the church is called to *honor and respect* the work and ministry of each other part. Each expression of the church listens, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel and requests of others. In this covenant, the various expressions of the United Church of Christ seek to *walk together in all God's ways*."

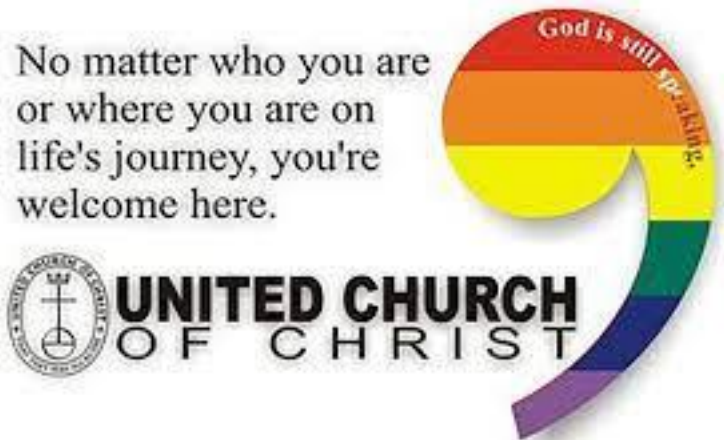
Non creedal: Testimonies, not tests of the faith

The United Church of Christ embraces a theological heritage that affirms the Bible as the authoritative witness to the Word of God, the creeds of the ecumenical councils, and the confessions of the Reformation. The UCC has roots in the "covenantal" tradition—meaning there is *no centralized authority or hierarchy that can impose any doctrine or form of worship on its members*. Christ alone is Head of the church. We seek a balance between freedom of conscience and accountability to the apostolic faith. The UCC therefore receives the *historic creeds and confessions of our ancestors as testimonies, but not tests of the faith*.

In essentials, **unity**.
In non-essentials, **liberty**.
In all things, **charity**.

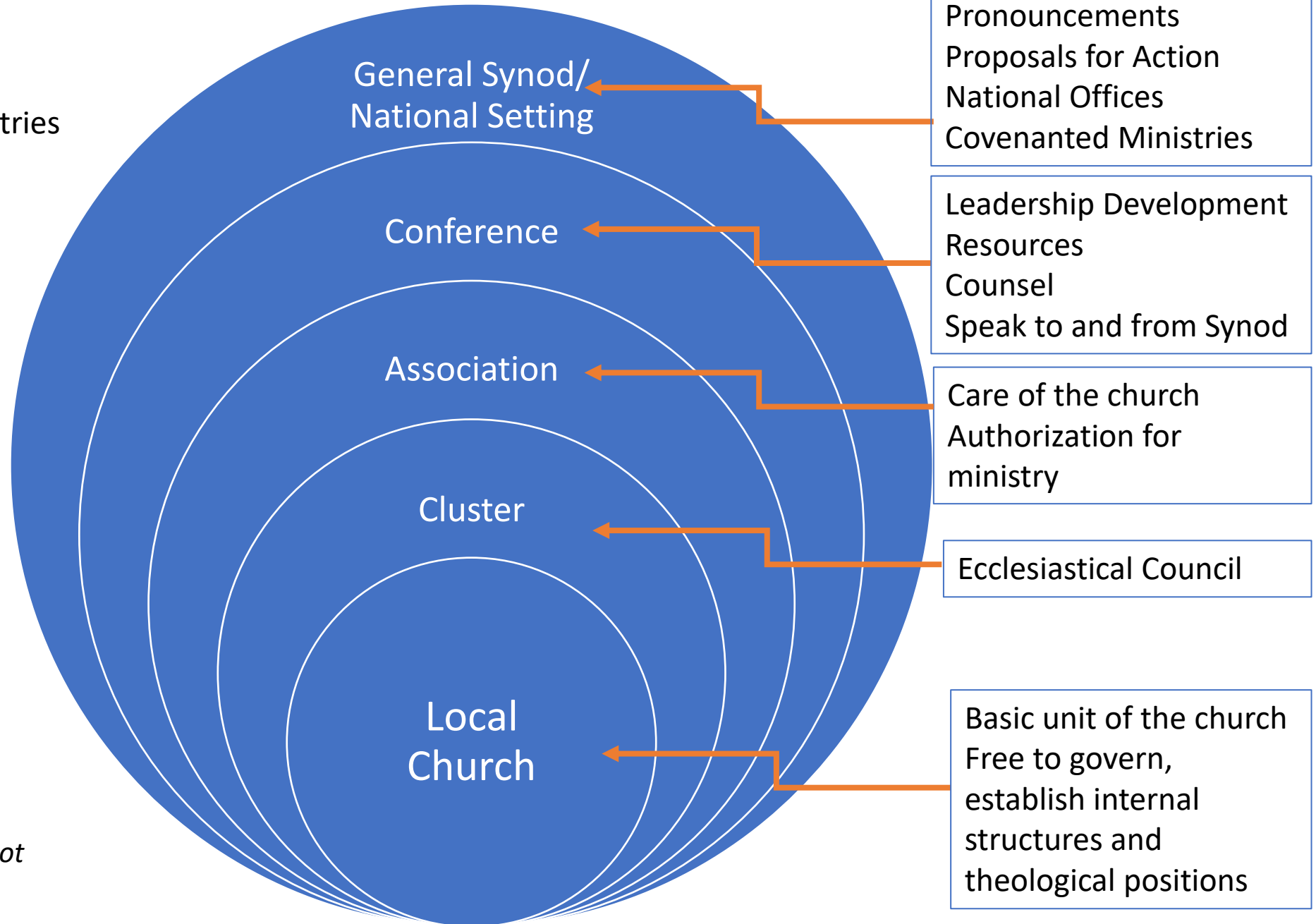


THE LORD HAS MORE TRUTH
YET TO BREAK FORTH OUT OF
HIS HOLY WORD.
- JOHN ROBINSON (PASTOR) -



National Setting

- General Ministries
- Local Church Ministries
- Justice and Witness Ministries
- Wider Church Ministries
 - Global Ministries with Disciples of Christ



The basic unit of the life and organization of the United Church of Christ is the local church.

- An interplay of wider interdependence with local autonomy characterizes the organization of the UCC.
- Each "setting" of the United Church of Christ relates in covenant with other settings, their *actions speaking "to but not for" each other.*

How does our history show up today?

- Pilgrim Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
- Elmhurst College
- Advocate Health Care
- UCAN
- Plymouth Place
- Chicago Theological Seminary
- What else?