

International Council of Community Churches

Home Office
21116 Washington Parkway
Frankfort, Illinois 60423
(815)464-5690
(815)464-5692 Fax
Website: <http://www.iccc.i-go.to/>

Statistics 2003
Source: *Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches 2005*

In the United States

108,806 Members
126 Congregations*
9 Regions
3 Zones
*5% Have dual membership with other denominations, and there are approximately 1000 non-member churches which are served by the ICCC.

Ministry

374 Clergy
283 Serving Parishes

Financial Data

Not Available.

Women in Ministry

In 1978 Barbara Holt became the first woman elected as president of the ICCC. In 1980, Marion F. Henley became the first African American woman to lead a major Christian communion.

Brief History

The **International Council of Community Churches (ICCC)** is an international, intercultural, interracial fellowship of churches and ministry centers which seeks to realize Christian unity in local, national, and world relations. The Council seeks fellowship, mutual support, and common ministries that reflect the unity of all who see themselves within the Christian tradition.

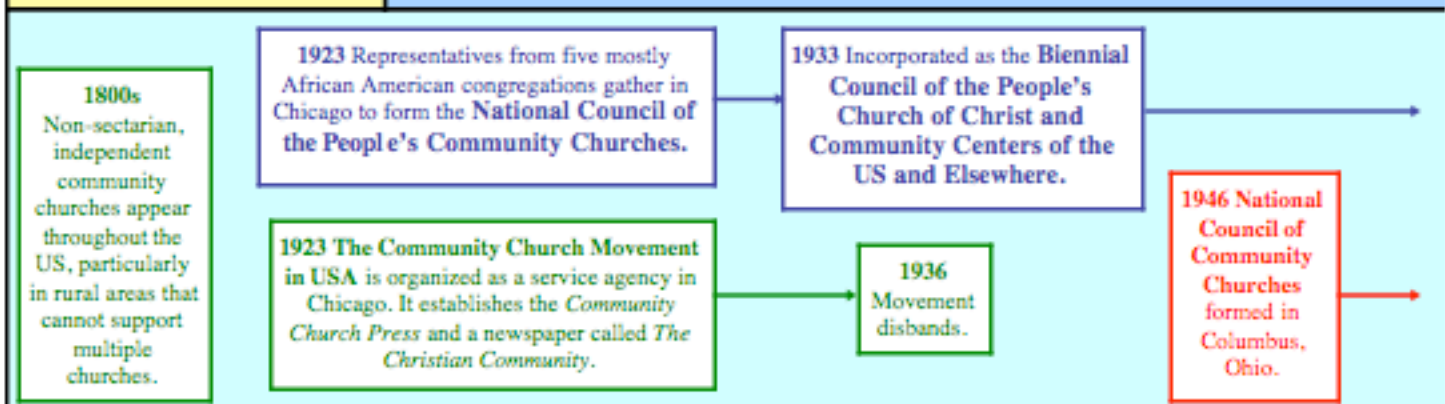
In 1950, two fellowships in the Community Church movement joined in an historic merger. At the time, their joining represented the largest interracial merger of religious bodies in America. The new creation was the International Council of Community Churches. Member churches and centers are united to be a fellowship of ecumenically minded, freedom-loving churches cooperating in fulfilling the mission of the Church.

Organization

The structure of the International Council of Community Churches consists of an Executive Director (clergy), a President (who may be clergy or lay), First and Second Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer; a Board of Trustees, and several Commissions. In the U.S., the Council is further managed through three zones and several regions and areas.

Churches and ministry centers are considered active members as long as they support the purpose of the Council, spiritually and financially. The membership meets once a year in an open conference. Each active member is eligible to send two voting delegates. These may be two lay delegates or one lay and one clergy delegate.

Churches are free and autonomous, own their own property, and choose their own clergy. The Council does not ordain clergy (individual churches do), nor does it run its own educational institutions or missions. However, it does sponsor a number of national and international missions.



Major Doctrines/Theology

The ICCC affirms and supports the right and responsibility of individual conscience in matters of God, Christ, and the Bible. The ICCC does not endorse a particular doctrinal statement, although individual churches may have their own such statements. However, in 1990 it adopted the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) *Churches in Covenant Communion* as one of its marks of unity. This document recognizes the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as witness and symbols of the faith, and affirms several elements of covenant:

- *Faith in one God who through the Word and in the Spirit creates, redeems, and sanctifies;*
- *Commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and as the incarnate and risen Lord;*
- *Obedience to the Holy Scriptures which testify to Tradition and to which Tradition testifies, as containing all things necessary for our salvation as well as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith;*
- *Commitment to faithful participation in the two sacraments ordained by Jesus Christ, baptism and Lord's Supper;*
- *Commitment to the evangelical and prophetic mission of God and to God's reign of justice and peace; and,*
- *Grateful acceptance of the ministry which the Holy Spirit has manifestly given to the churches.*

Worship and Sacrament

Individual churches have complete autonomy in making decisions about how to worship and celebrate sacramental rites. For example, members of the Roman Catholic Rite churches are predominately former Roman Catholic congregants who have chosen to retain that style of worship and liturgy. According to J. Phillip Smith, former moderator of the Council's Faith and Order Commission:

Most Community Church congregations have incorporated a variety of customs from the rich array of the Judeo-Christian heritage. Such flexibility means variety in interpretation. But the very variety we represent is a major characteristic of the ways in which we understand our common faith. We believe that God loves all and excludes none. We believe worship takes hold of our lives regardless of specific interpretation. So we accept the pluralism of various traditions, not as obstacles to overcome, but as gifts to celebrate.

Ecumenical Involvement

The ICCC is ecumenical by its very nature as a federation of individual and autonomous churches from different backgrounds, theologies, and worship styles. Individual churches are encouraged to take an active role in local, regional, and national ecumenical affairs.

In 1974 the ICCC joined the **World Council of Churches (WCC)**, and in 1977 it became a member of the **National Council of Churches of Christ, USA (NCCC)**.

The ICCC joined the **Consultation on Church Union (COCU)** in 1975, and in 1990 became the first member to approve the covenanting proposal *Churches in Covenant Communion*.

During the 1960s, the ICCC engaged in discussions with the **United Church of Christ (UCC)**.

Important ICCC Resources

Constitution of the ICCC.

Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting. The Consultation on Church Union. (Princeton, NJ: Consultation on Church Union, 1989).

