



June 21, 2016

Written by Connie Larkman

The United Church of Christ general minister and president is releasing a survey today to the wider church, looking for input from every member of the denomination about a proposed UCC mission statement. The [survey, with a completion deadline of August 22](#), is the latest step in crafting a Purpose, Mission and Vision Statement that underscores the UCC's commitment to unity, radical hospitality and full inclusion.

In a letter to the wider church, the Rev. John C. Dorhauer shares the process that has led up to this [20-minute survey](#) and how member feedback will help firm up the language of a statement that best answers 'Why the United Church of Christ?'

Here is the text of Rev. Dorhauer's letter:

Dear Friend,

The United Church of Christ is seeking to declare a Purpose, a Mission, and a Vision that is consistent with our historic commitments and our current calling; that is large enough to inspire our covenant partners at every level to give themselves fully over to a gospel that changes lives; and that is particular enough to answer the question, "Why the United Church of Christ?"

I believe the Holy Spirit envisions a future in which the United Church of Christ matters. I believe that a shared mission, an understanding that the Holy Spirit has need of us and calls us to do something others were not called to do – will help revitalize a denomination in need of missional clarity.

For the last nine months, leaders at every level of the denomination have participated in small and large group discussions, have engaged in conference calls and webinars, have been interviewed and consulted. Two things emerge very clearly.

First, the United Church of Christ was birthed out of an impulse to respond to Christ's prayer "That they may all be one."

A clear part of our mission is to structure the Church in such a way that we reflect what God sees as possible—yes, even intended—for human community: a unity that overcomes differences in order to recognize the beauty inherent in all God's children.

Second, the United Church of Christ is called to proclaim a gospel of radical hospitality, of full inclusion, and of extravagant welcome.

These missional impulses are built into our DNA.

Nine months of conversation, dialogue, and discernment have brought us to this place. With each conversation, the language you see in this survey has changed in subtle but important ways. We are inviting you now into the dialogue. [Please take a few minutes to complete the survey](#). The question is this: does the language both capture the intent of a church whose mission is built around unifying the body and offering extravagant welcome, and at the same time serve to inspire?

Your insights, reactions, and comments will help us refine this even further.

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out. Thank you for caring for the ongoing Purpose, Mission, and Vision of a denomination the Spirit will need in order to bring God's Shalom to a world so desperately in need of it.

Sincerely,

*The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President*