

Former UCC president Avery D. Post dies at 96

by [Hans Holznagel](#) in the [October 7, 2020](#) issue



(Photo courtesy of the United Church of Christ)

Avery D. Post, president of the United Church of Christ from 1977 to 1989, died on September 7. He was 96.

Post was known as an ecumenist, an advocate for social justice, and a skilled preacher. He led the denomination through years that included Cold War peace dialogues, racial justice activism, and support for emerging movements for women's and LGBTQ rights and inclusion.

As president, Post often described the UCC as an "ecumenical catalyst" and was deeply committed to the work of the Consultation on Church Union (now Churches Uniting in Christ), a 40-year dialogue on Christian unity among Protestant denominations. An ecumenical partnership between the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was formalized during his tenure.

He held numerous ecumenical positions during his ministry, including serving on the National Council of Churches' governing board and executive committee and the World Council of Churches' central committee.

Post met several times with leaders of churches in what was then the Soviet Union to find ways in which they and their US counterparts could arrive at mutual understanding about issues related to peace—and to work together for disarmament and the easing of East-West tensions.

He led the UCC in maintaining ecumenical relations in Germany, Central America, the Middle East, and Asia. With other world leaders, he visited representatives of the South African Council of Churches and led ecumenical church actions to end apartheid.

Following his retirement to Vermont, he continued his justice and peace advocacy and served as moderator of the planning committee for the seventh general assembly of the World Council of Churches, held in 1991 in Canberra, Australia. —United Church of Christ. Barb Powell, a past communication staffer in the national ministries of the UCC, contributed to this article.