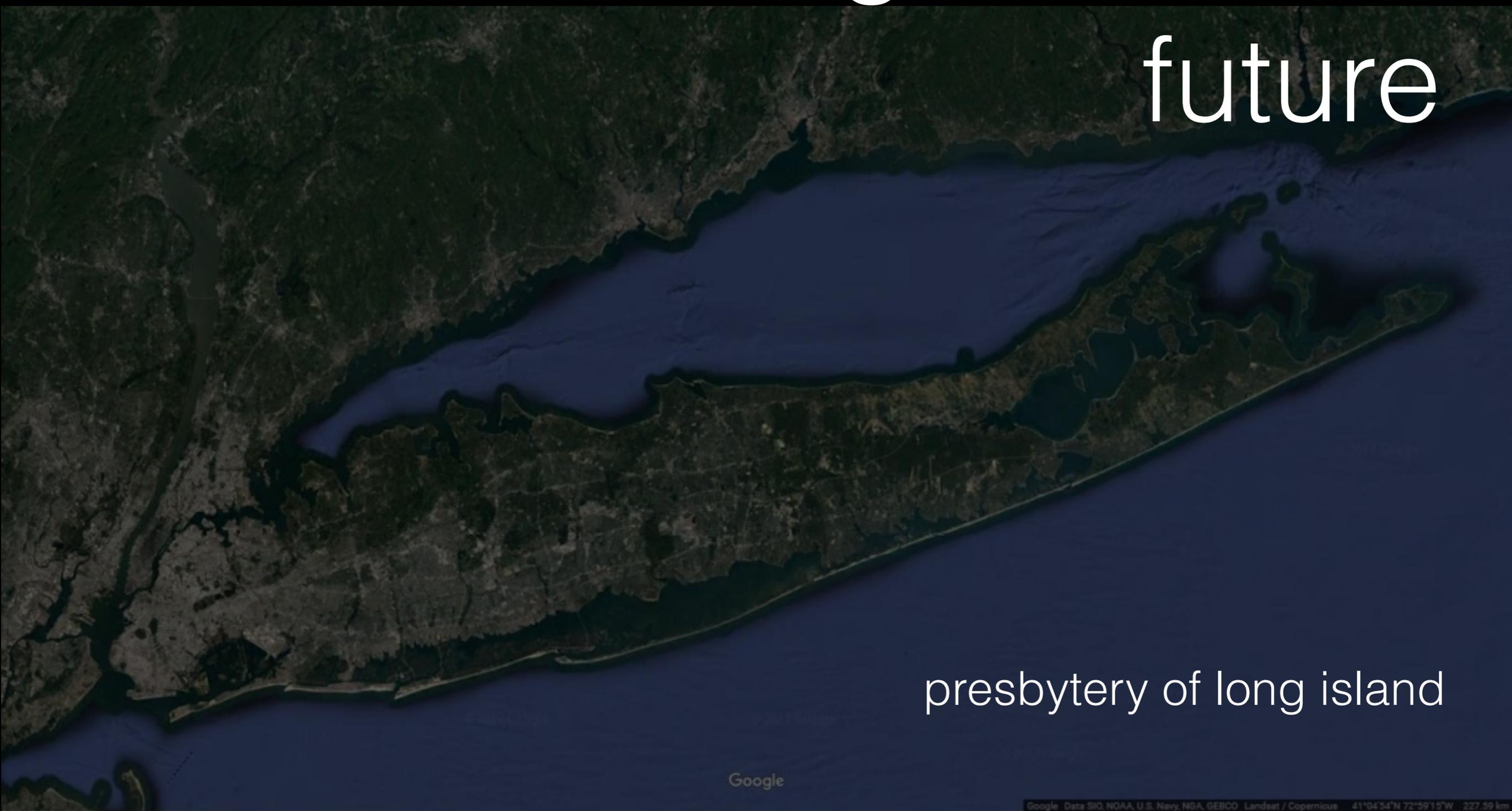


thinking about the
future



presbytery of long island

Making the House Ready for the Lord
Mary Oliver

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
Still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice—it is the season of their
many children. What shall I do? And under the
eaves
and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances—but it is
the season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do?

And

the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard

while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;

what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly

up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox

the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know

that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,

as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

come in, come in.

a day for receptivity ...

communication guidelines

- understanding before agreement
- asking honest & personal questions
 - honoring one another
- remembering different contexts
 - keeping the goal in sight

prediction vs. preparation vs. participation

the danger of complacency

the future of christianity

context:

Long Island

Racially/Ethnically Diverse

Suburban - Urban Adjacent

the future of christianity

55 Presbyterian congregations

10,000 members

methodology:

a futurist methodology:

- current trends (likely)
- best case (desired)
- worst case (highest risk)

the future of christianity

- current trends (likely): shrinking & wrinkling
megachurch peak and decline
immigrant strength
financial volatility followed by stability
What will this mean?

- best case (desired): renaissance
What will this mean?

- worst case (highest risk): white Christian nationalism
toxic masculine resurgence
What will this mean?

Session 1: The theological future of Christianity

	construction	deconstruction	creative reconstruction
GOD			
JESUS			
SPIRIT			
TRINITY			

	construction	deconstruction	creative reconstruction
SCRIPTURE			
SALVATION			
GOSPEL			
CHURCH			

love as our theological focus

system of beliefs vs. way of life

a prayer from the Corrymeela Community in Ireland

prayer for a new name (1/2)

Genesis 16:13

God of Hagar,
When Hagar was exiled in the desert
she met you
and gave you a name:
the Living One
Who Sees Me.

We have walked far,
and seen many things
and now,
because of what we have seen
because of where we are going
because of where we are
we give this new name now.

a prayer from the Corrymeela Community in Ireland
prayer for a new name (2/2)
Genesis 16:13

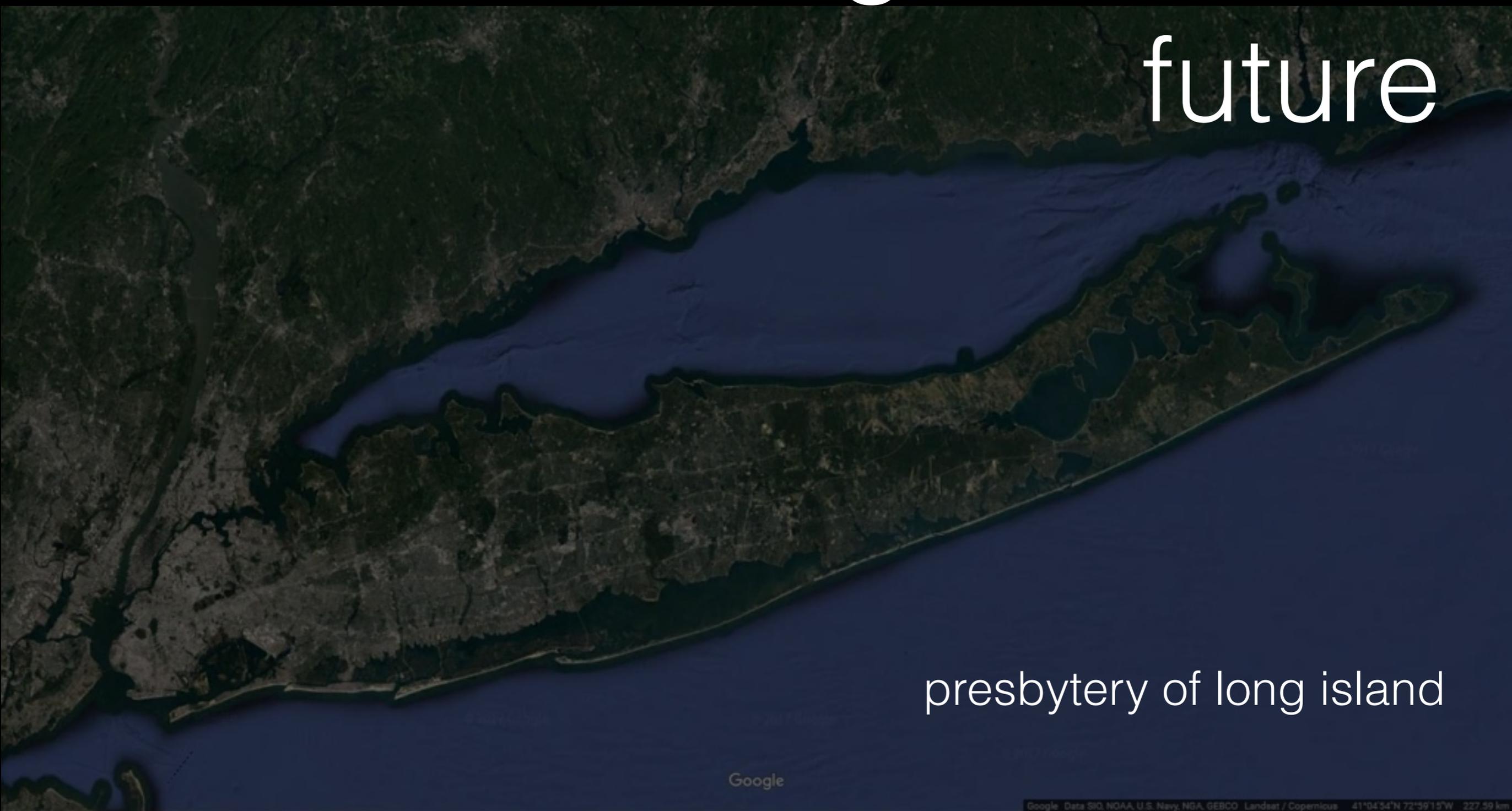
We do not destroy past names,
because they have brought us here.

We celebrate the new name
that will bring us on.

Because you are known by many names -
names which bring us on.

Amen.

thinking about the
future



presbytery of long island

Session 2: The liturgical future of Christianity

what is liturgy?

the basics

Liturgy is an orderly succession of rituals and practices used in gathered worship.

It comes from a Greek term meaning a public service or work performed by a citizen, hence its original meaning, “work of the people.”

Liturgy is an orderly succession of **rituals** or practices used in gathered worship.

rituals: actions involving the body by which we bond to
meaning

sign of the cross

baptism

eucharist

ritualism: bonding to the wrong meaning or no meaning

Liturgy is an orderly succession of rituals or **practices** used in gathered worship.

practices: actions currently within our power by which we become capable of doing things currently beyond our power.

prayer

fasting

listening to sermons

malpractice: becoming capable of the wrong things, or
nothing

liturgical leadership

determining the meaning to bond to and curating the
rituals to aid that bonding

and determining the capacities to develop and the
practices to support that development

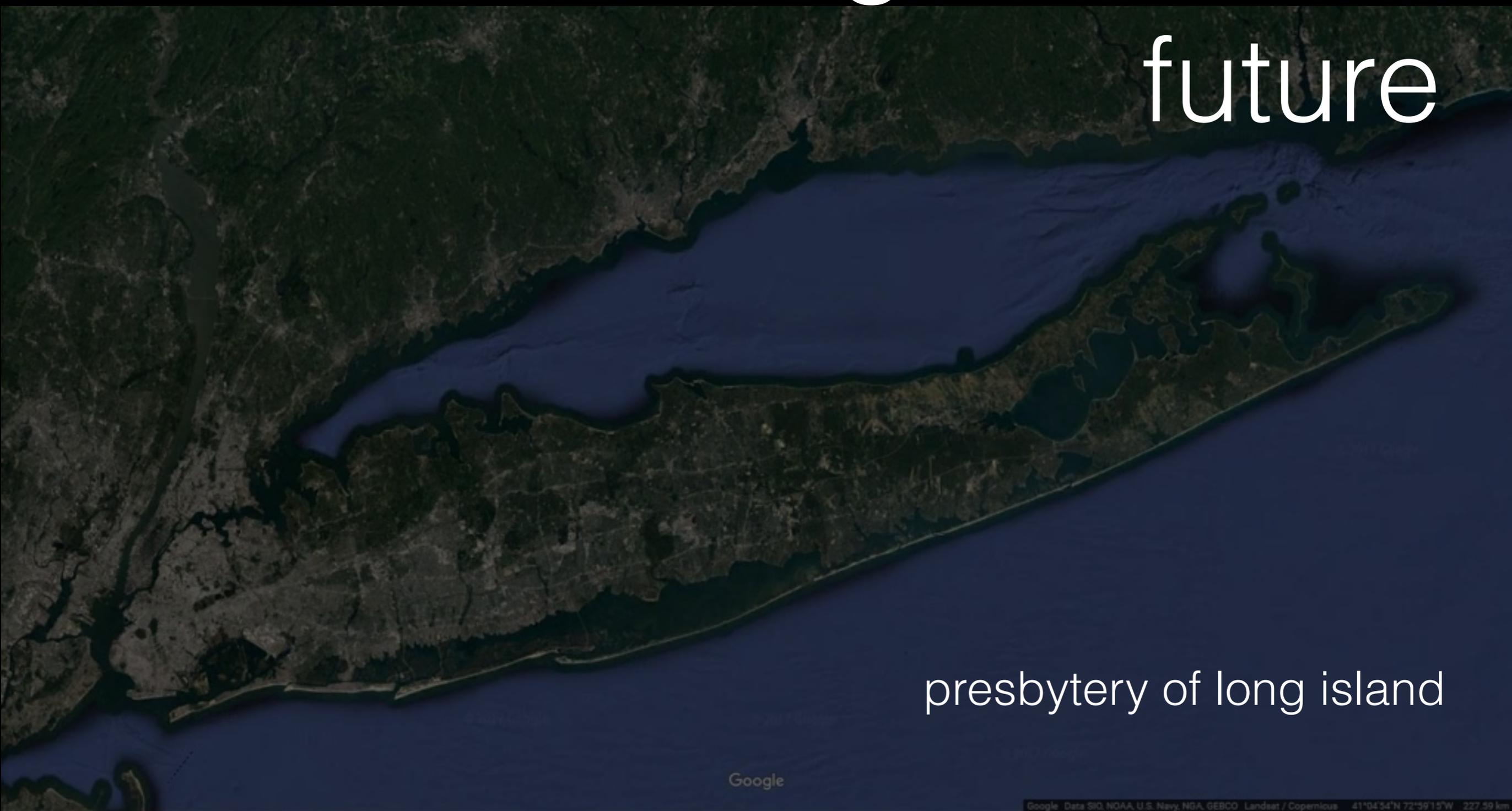
and reevaluating when necessary.

meaning
celebration
community
formation
administration
mission

leadership in way of love

	construction	deconstruction	creative reconstruction
CHURCH BUILDINGS			
WEEKLY WORSHIP			
SERMONS			
SINGING			

thinking about the
future



presbytery of long island

Session 3: The missional future of Christianity

the privatized gospel is primarily

INFORMATION ON HOW TO GO TO HEAVEN AFTER YOU DIE

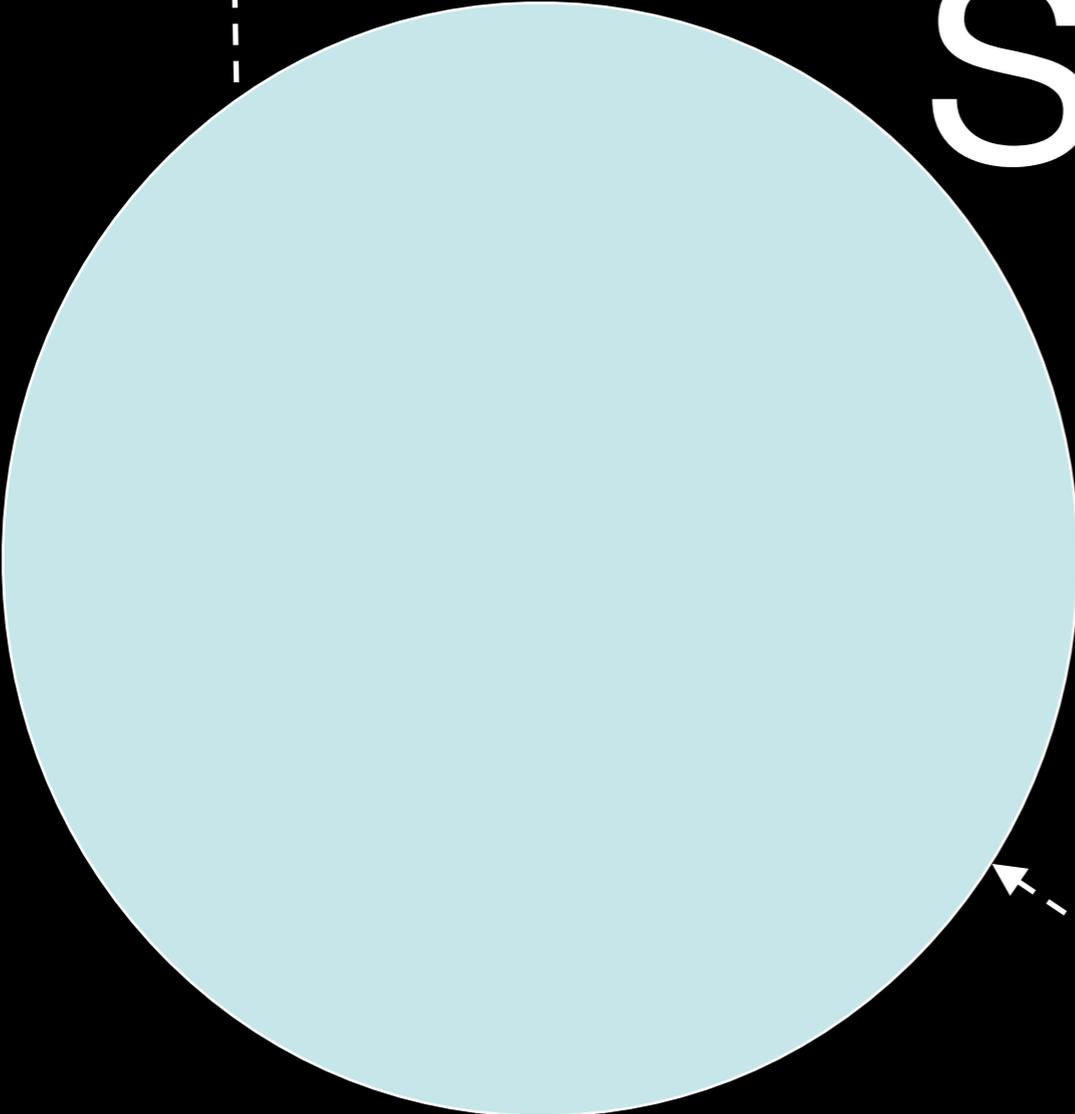
*with a large footnote about increasing your personal
happiness and success through God.*

with a small footnote about character development

with a smaller footnote about spiritual experience

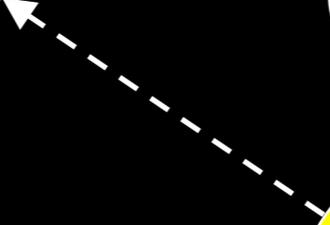
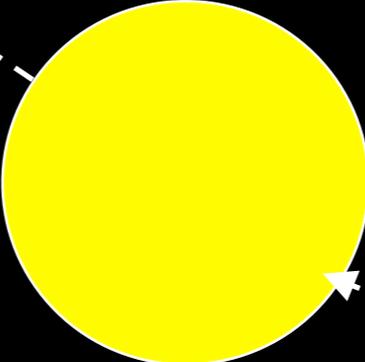
with a smaller footnote about social/global transformation.

Heaven

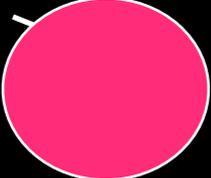


Self (soul)

church



world



Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

The time is fulfilled, and

the kingdom of God

has come near;

repent,

and believe in the good news...

Follow me and I will make you fish for
people.'

The time is fulfilled, and
the kingdom of God

has come near

repent,

and believe in the good news...

Follow me and I will make you fish for
people.'

The time is fulfilled, and
the kingdom of God
has come near (is at hand)
repent,
and believe in the good news...
Follow me and I will make you fish for
people.'

The time is fulfilled, and
the kingdom of God
has come near;

repent,

and believe in the good news...

Follow me and I will make you fish for
people.'

The time is fulfilled, and
the kingdom of God
has come near;

repent,

and **believe in the good news...**

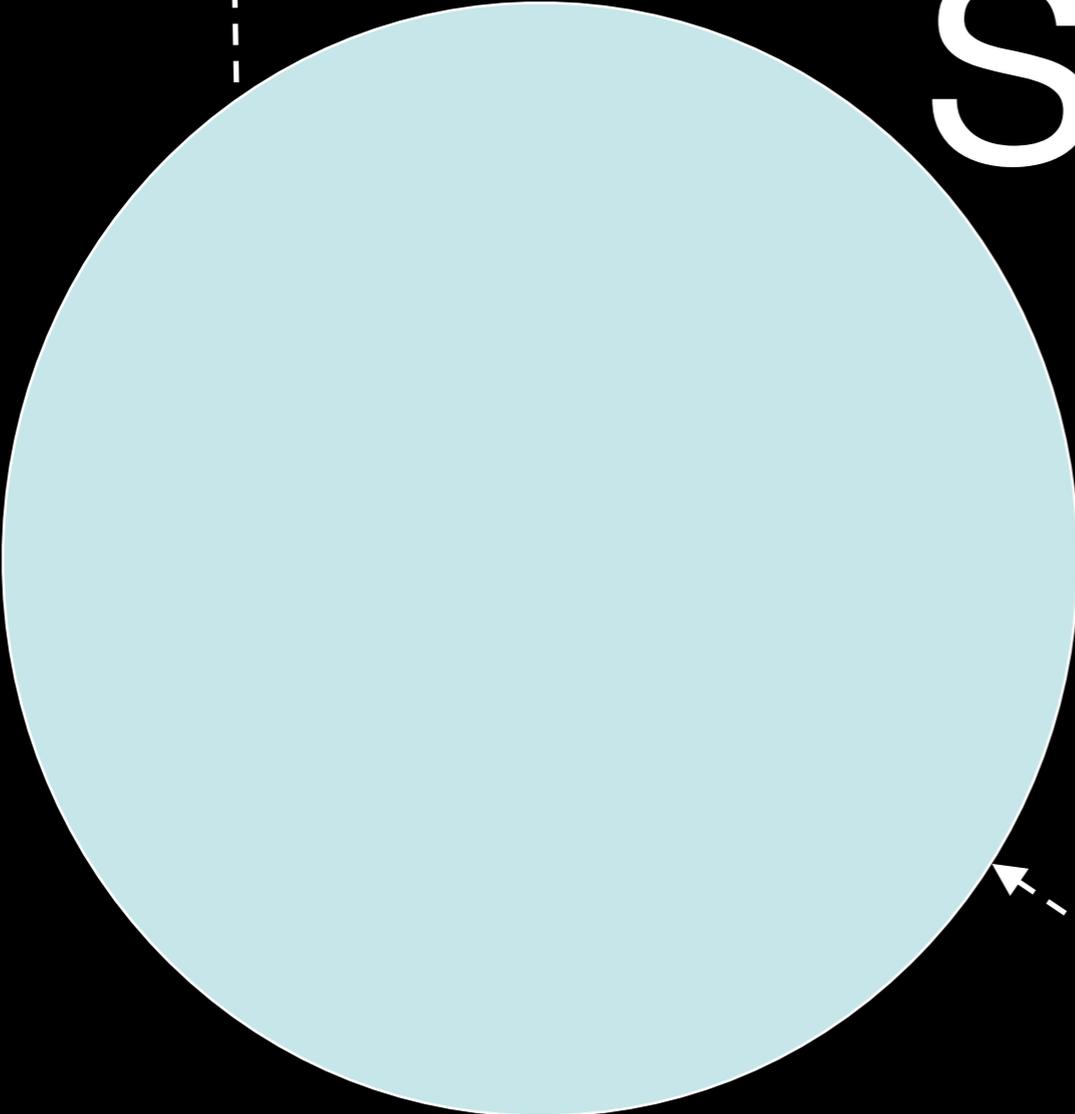
Follow me and I will make you fish for
people.'

The time is fulfilled, and
the kingdom of God
has come near;
repent,
and believe in the good news...

Follow me and

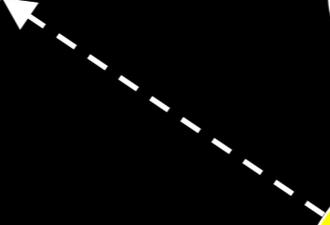
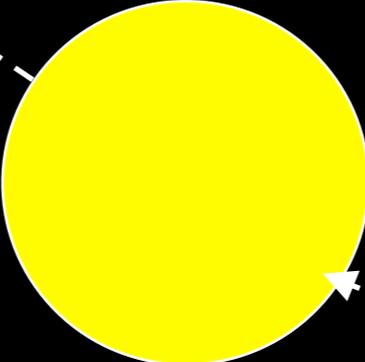
I will make you **fish for people.**'

Heaven

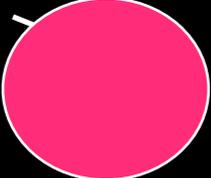


Self (soul)

church



world

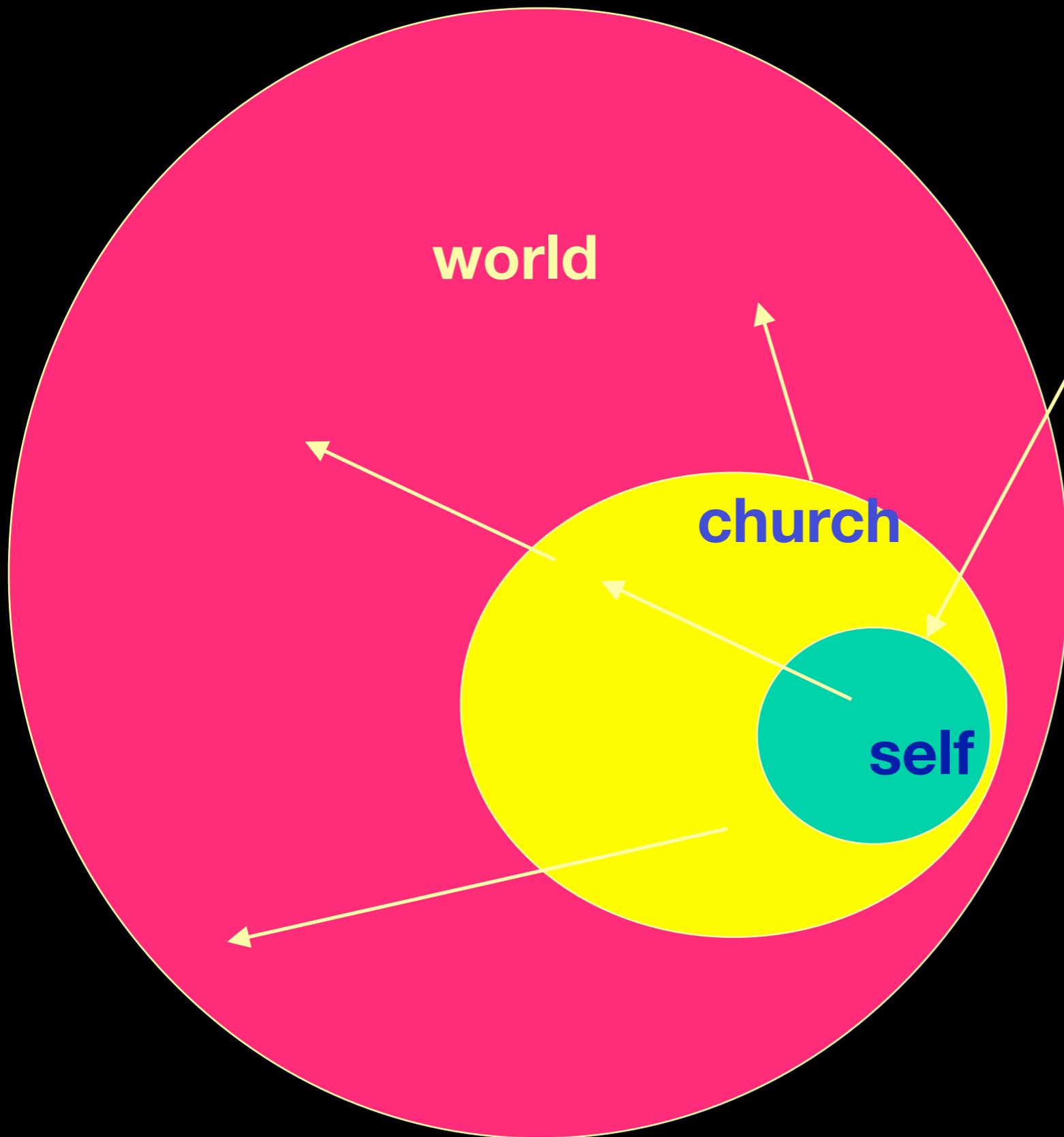


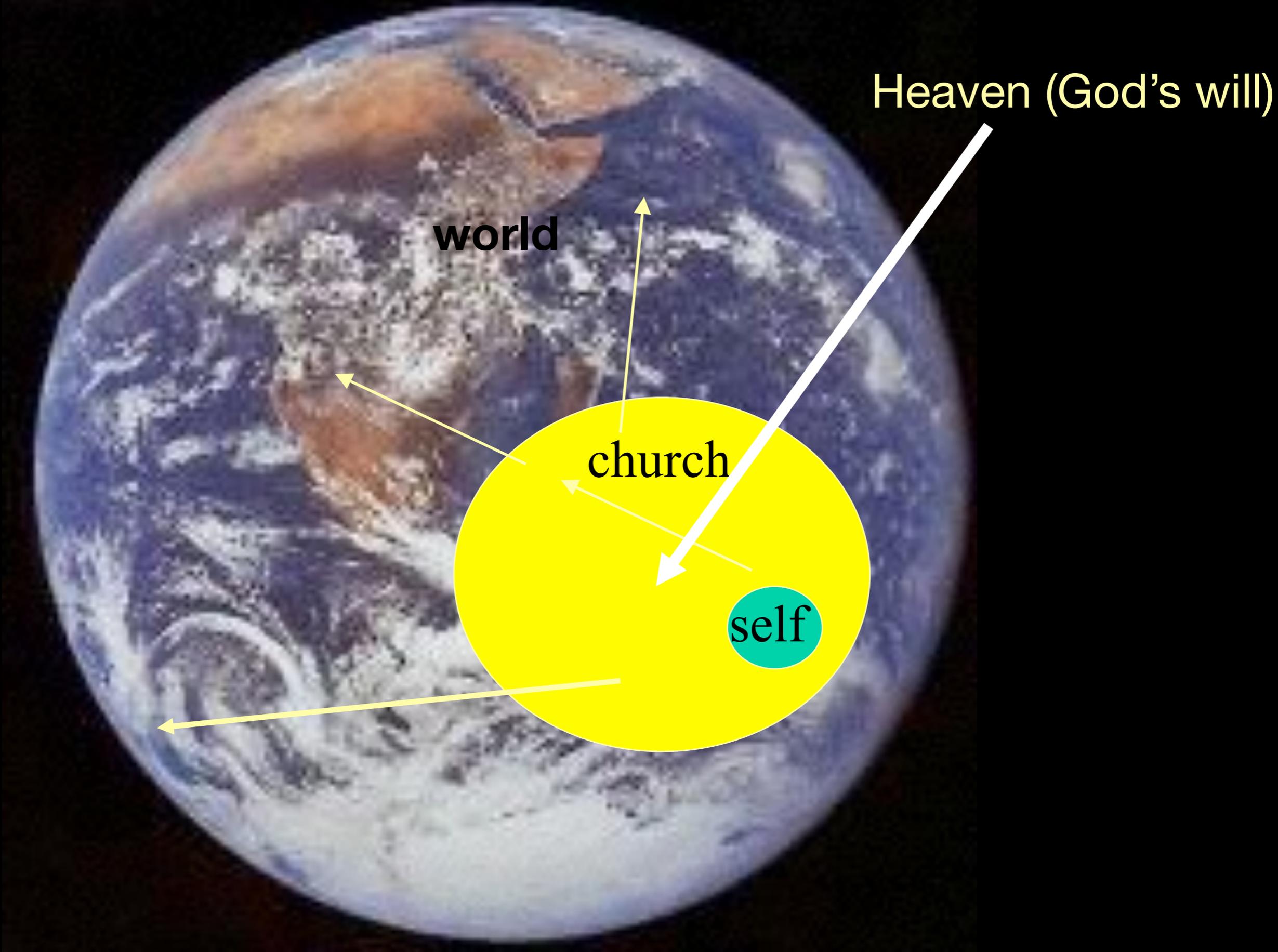
Heaven

world

church

self





Heaven (God's will)

world

church

self

Gospel of saving individual souls from hell, and abandoning earth to destruction.

Two
Gospels:



Gospel of saving earth* from human sin, beginning with us.

*Including individuals

planet
poverty
peace



The church is the unique disciple forming community that practices the way of life taught and embodied by Jesus, the way of God's kingdom ... and that recruits people to join the mission of Jesus, the mission of God's kingdom - in family, neighborhood, workplace, political and economic life,



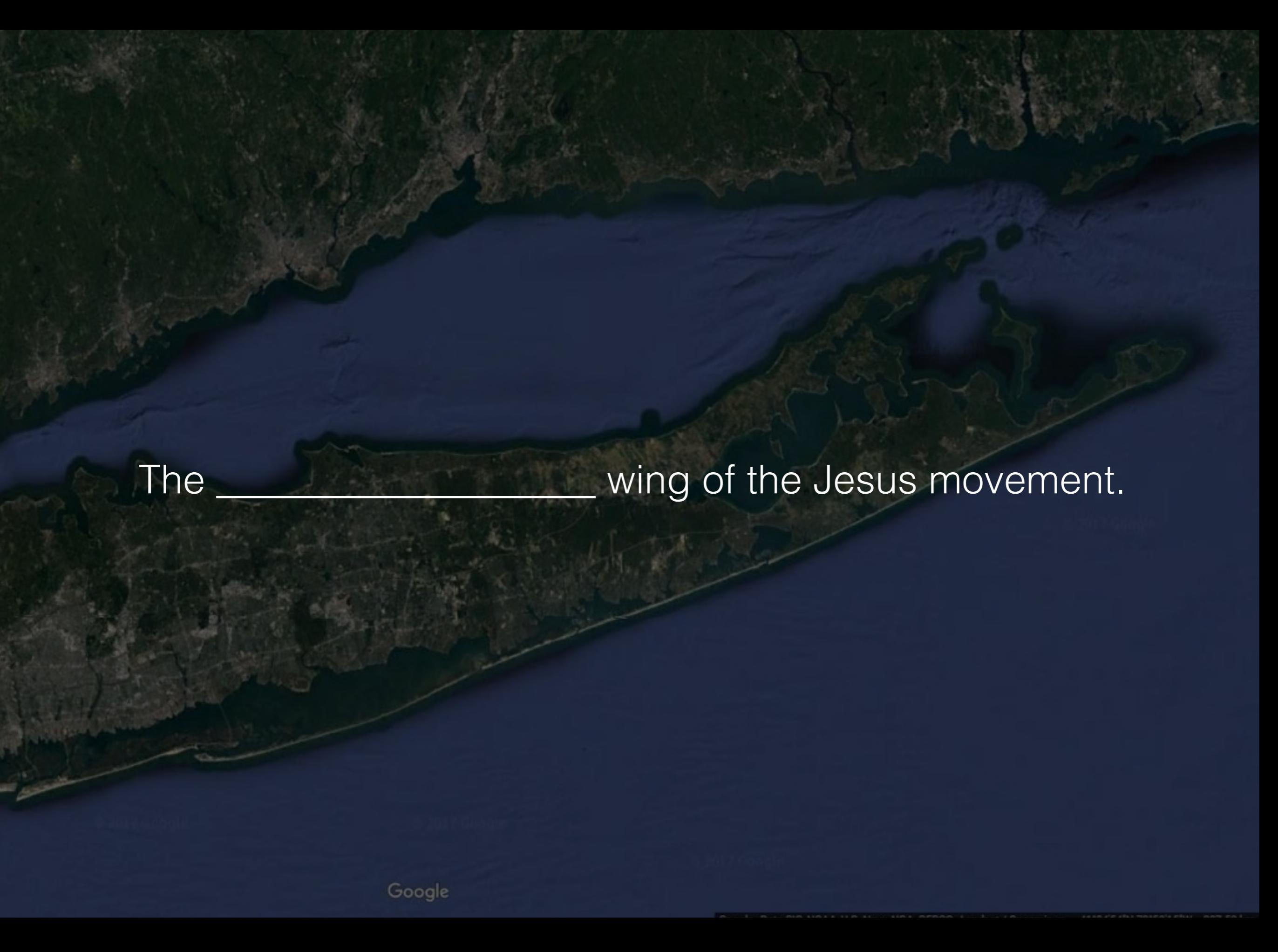




Something is on the way out and something
else is painfully being born.
It is as if something were crumbling, decaying,
and exhausting itself,
while something else, still indistinct, were
arising from the rubble....

We are in a phase when one age is
succeeding another, when everything is
possible.

Vaclav Havel, "The New Measure of Man"



The _____ wing of the Jesus movement.

Working in our tribes



PCUSA



UCC



UMC



Episcopal



Christian
Church
DoC



ELCA

Historic Black,
Ethnic/
Immigrant,
Progressive
Roman
Catholic,
Progressive
Evangelical,
etc.

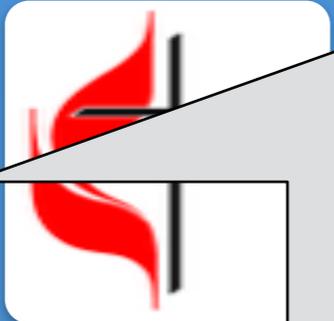
nostalgic



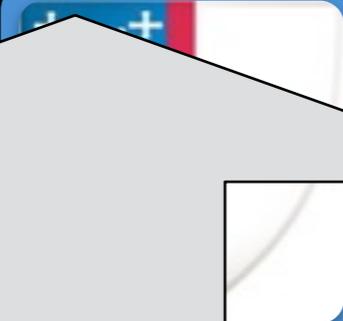
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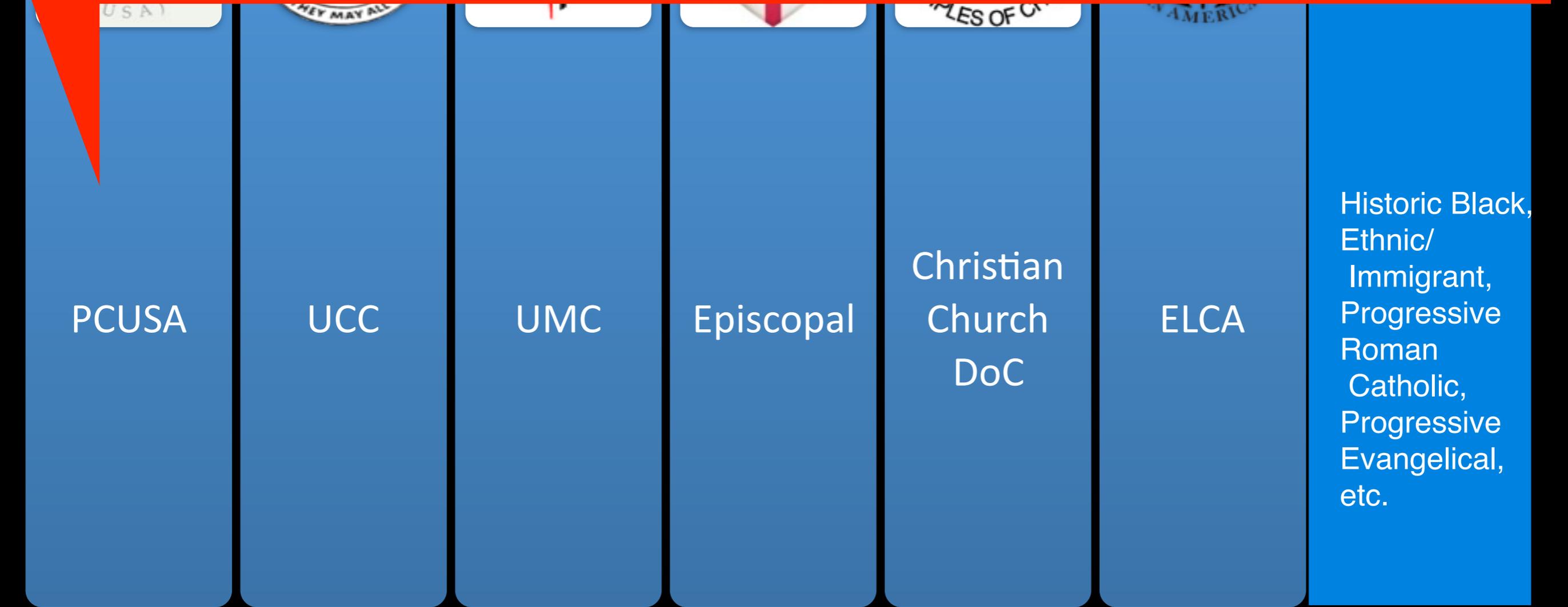
eggshell

holding tension

just & generous



A NOSTALGIC, REGRESSIVE MOVEMENT



PCUSA

UCC

UMC

Episcopal

Christian
Church
DoC

ELCA

Historic Black,
Ethnic/
Immigrant,
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Roman
Catholic,
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etc.

Working across our tribes



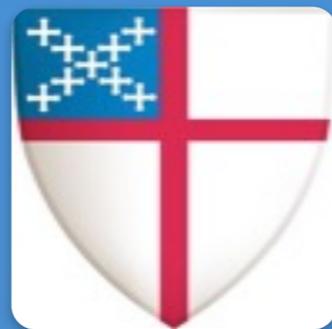
PCUSA



UCC



UMC



Episcopal



Christian
Church
DoC



ELCA

Historic Black,
Ethnic/
Immigrant
Progressive
Roman
Catholic,
Progressive

A VITAL SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT FOR JUST AND GENEROUS CHRISTIAN FAITH?



PCUSA



UCC



UMC



Episcopal



Christian Church
DoC



ELCA



Historic Black,
Ethnic
Immigrants

A VITAL SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT

How can we build trans-denominational alignment?



Every song

Every architectural/design decision

Every sermon

Every budget

Every prayer

Every retreat

Every class

Every book recommendation

Every program

Every outreach program

Every mission trip

Every alliance

Every announcement

Every social media post

Every class & small group

Every staff hire

Every award

Every staff development experience

The success of an organization depends on its ability to align its members around its message, mission, values, and goals.

meaning
celebration
community
formation
administration
mission

leadership in way of love