8C - The Nazis and the Churches

Early stages

- **Co-operation**
- **Concordat with catholic church in 1933**
  - Hitler agreed to leave the Catholic Church alone and allow it to keep control of its **schools**
  - In return, Church **stayed out of politics**

Hitler unification attempt

- Attempted to join all Protestant Churches into one official **Reich Church**
  - Headed by Protestant **Bishop Ludwig Müller**
  - Many Germans still felt loyal to the original local Churches rather than state-approved church

Alternate religion

- Hitler encouraged the **pagan German Faith Movement**
  - Worship of sun
  - Loyalty to Hitler
  - Peasant farmer 'blood and soil' philosophy
  - **Attracted 200,000 followers; 0.3% of population**

Opposers of Nazis

- **Catholic Bishop Galen**
  - Criticised Nazis throughout 1930s
  - **In 1941 he led a popular protest against Nazi policies of killing mentally ill and disabled people**
  - So much support Nazis decided too risky to stop him
- **Protestant** ministers
  - High-profile critic (30s)
  - **Pastor Martin Niemöller**
    - Spent 1938 - 1945 in a concentration camp
  - **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**
    - Gestapo stopped him from preaching against Nazis in 1937

Formed alternative Protestant Church to the official Reich Church

Presented with xmind