

What does the Bible say?

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

(Genesis 1:27)

What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.

(Psalm 8: 4-5)

But they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid, for the Lord of hosts has spoken. **(Micah 4:4)**

I am the vine you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you do nothing. **(John 15:5)**



What does The United Methodist Church say?

Indigenous peoples demand respect of their right to their culture, spirituality, language, tradition, forms of organization, ways of knowing and doing, and their intellectual properties. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #6025, “Globalization and Its Impact on Human Dignity and Human Rights”)**

The United Methodist Church condemns the Doctrine of Discovery as a legal document used for the seizing of lands and abusing the human rights of indigenous peoples. The United Methodist Church will work toward eliminating the use of the Doctrine of Discovery. **(2016 Book of Resolutions #3321, “Native People and the United Methodist Church”)**

The culture and traditions of indigenous peoples are sacred. This is why The United Methodist Church is committed to promoting the “American Indian Religious Freedom Act, which declared that it was the policy of Congress to protect and preserve the inherent right of Native Americans to believe, express, and practice their traditional religions.” **(2016 Book of Resolutions #3334, “Regarding Native American Culture”)**

United Methodists are calling for an “act of repentance” that “truly honors what indigenous people feel about how they have been wronged and where restitution and forgiveness might come from and what it will look like and entail.” Beyond repentance is the need for “acts of justice,” with “efforts to undo and correct the injustices and misunderstandings of the last 500 years” of colonialism. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #6025, “Globalization and Its Impact on Human Dignity and Human Rights”)**



CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

What do the facts say?

- Indigenous peoples go by many names. Some names are chosen, others imposed. In the United States, native peoples include *American Indians*, *Alaska Natives* and *Native Hawaiians*. The Sami people live in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula in Russia. In Africa, many terms are used, including *tribal peoples*. In Latin America, the term used is *pueblos indígenas*, while in the Philippines, they are called *katutubong mamamayan* or in southern Philippines, *Lumad*.
- There are more than 350 million indigenous peoples in at least 70 countries around the world. In the U.S. there are 565 federally-recognized tribes and dozens more that are vying for federal recognition. Federal recognition bestows some basic rights and protections that would otherwise not be available.
- “Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them.”¹
- The two most comprehensive global instruments protecting indigenous peoples are the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention of 1989 by the International Labour Organization (ILO C169).



¹UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous People’s Rights, J. Martinez Cabo

What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

- **Organize** an event around our “act of repentance,” focused on a “process of healing relationships with indigenous persons throughout the world” (BOR #3324). Invite representatives of indigenous peoples to come and speak.
- **Advocate** for the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and develop policies that uphold the rights of indigenous peoples. Learn about the Doctrine here <https://bit.ly/3fRcuup-Doc-trineOfDiscovery>
- **Facilitate** a small group reflection in your church using resources produced by Native American and Indigenous Peoples ministries across the connectional and global United Methodist Church. Look for resources here <https://bit.ly/3rQIQbj-IndigenousPeoples> and here <https://bit.ly/3CpTif2-NativePeoples>.
- **Learn** about indigenous peoples around the world, especially in countries where The United Methodist Church is present. Discover how you can be in common ministry and witness with them, including in preserving and increasing the speakers of indigenous languages. See <https://bit.ly/3f1eTxh-UN-Indigenous-Peoples>.
- **Pray** for the evolving work of the United Methodist Global Working Group of Indigenous Peoples: a collaboration among general agencies and indigenous peoples’ groups.



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