

TITLE: A Resolution Regarding Establishing of Ongoing Relationships with Minnesota Native American Communities

DATE SUBMITTED: March 2, 2009

JOINTLY SUBMITTED BY: Justice and Witness Team of the Minnesota Conference UCC
John Guttermann
New Brighton UCC
1000 Long Lake Rd
New Brighton, MN 55112
651-633-1327

Emmaus Anti-Racism Transformation Team of the Minnesota Conference UCC

Patsy Parker
4617 Grand Ave. A.
Minneapolis, MN 55419
612-825-1743

SUMMARY OF INTENT: The 2008 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ passed a resolution to mark the 150th anniversary of the State of Minnesota as a year to acknowledge the history of the relationship between European-Americans and Native Americans, repent of the injustices that are part of that history and their continuing legacy, and begin a new relationship by U.S. federal and state governments and non-Native peoples with Native American governments and Native peoples. During this year, the Conference has only begun to acknowledge the history. This resolution would continue the process of historical acknowledgement that could lead to repentance and establishing new relationships. The goal of the process would be to have a significant portion of the work accomplished by 2012, the 150th anniversary of the Dakota War of 1862.

FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

Funding will come out of the budgets of Conference Office, the Justice & Witness Team, and the Emmaus Antiracism Leadership Team.

WHEREAS the State of Minnesota recognized its 150th anniversary in 2008; and

WHEREAS members of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ are also citizens of the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS the history of the relationship between the Native American and European American communities is rife with injustices visited upon Native American nations and attempts to destroy or dominate Indian peoples, families, resources and cultures, along with resistance by Native Americans to this destruction and domination; and

WHEREAS Christians believe, and try to live by, the words of Jesus Christ that “The truth shall make you free;” (John 8:32b) and

WHEREAS Christians believe that we are called to repentance; (Acts 2:38; Romans 2:1-11) and

WHEREAS Christians are called by the Gospel to show evidence of our repentance; (Matthew 3:8, 10; Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 4:22-32) and

WHEREAS Christians are called to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves; (Mark 12:28-32; Luke 10:25-28) and

WHEREAS the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls Christians to reach out to each other and our neighbors in love and compassion, with justice and in peace; (Matthew 25:31-46; James 2:14-26) and
WHEREAS citizens of the State of Minnesota have access to resources to learn the history of the European American and Native American relationship:

1 BE IT RESOLVED that the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United
2 Church of Christ, call on all congregations, members, and other bodies of the Minnesota
3 Conference of the United Church of Christ to
4 - become knowledgeable about the history of the relationship between the Native American
5 and European American communities,
6 - engage in discussions within congregations and communities regarding that history,
7 - form antiracist, justice-seeking relationships in support of Native American governments
8 and communities including seeking to understand the significance of, the nature of, and
9 the responsibilities involved in extending apologies for the unjust treatment of Native
10 Americans by European Americans;

11
12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during the upcoming years the Justice & Witness Team and
13 the Emmaus Anti-Racism Team will request the assistance of all congregations and other
14 bodies of the United Church of Christ in Minnesota in sharing local and Conference-wide
15 experiences building relationships and becoming more trust-worthy allies with Native
16 American governments, communities and individuals. After becoming mutually
17 trustworthy allies to Native American governments, communities and individuals, the
18 Conference and individual congregations will be in a better position to consider the need
19 for apologies to Native American nations and communities. The Justice & Witness Team
20 and the Emmaus Antiracism Team will report semi-annually to the Board of Directors on
21 this effort and the Conference shall explore this effort in depth at its subsequent Annual
22 Meetings; and
23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference
25 of the United Church of Christ, call upon our partner communions in and through the
26 Minnesota Council of Churches to join the Minnesota Conference in the various actions
27 described in this Resolution; and
28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Justice and Witness Team and Emmaus Anti-Racism
30 Team continue working together to provide resources and opportunities for congregations
31 and individuals of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ to learn the
32 truth about this aspect of our State's history, to develop an educational model that builds
33 trust between Native American governments, communities and individuals and non-Native
34 Americans, and to be in antiracist, justice-seeking relationships with Native American
35 nations and communities located within the State; and
36

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that when individuals and congregations of the Minnesota
38 Conference of the United Church of Christ have learned more about the history of Native
39 Americans in Minnesota and have reached clarity about appropriate actions in support of a
40 new relationship between Native American and European American Communities, the
41 Justice and Witness Team and the Emmaus Anti-Racism Team will return to the Annual
42 Meeting for commitment to these transformative actions.