

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

3
4 **DATE SUBMITTED:** March 2, 2009

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6 **JOINTLY SUBMITTED BY: Justice and Witness Team of the Minnesota Conference UCC**

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20 **SUMMARY OF INTENT:** The 2008 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference United Church
21 of Christ passed a resolution to mark the 150th anniversary of the State of Minnesota as a year to
22 acknowledge the history of the relationship between European-Americans and Native Americans,
23 repent of the injustices that are part of that history and their continuing legacy, and begin a new
24 relationship by U.S. federal and state governments and non-Native peoples with Native American
25 governments and Native peoples. During this year, the Conference has only begun to acknowledge
26 the history. This resolution would continue the process of historical acknowledgement that could lead
27 to repentance and establishing new relationships. The goal of the process would be to have a
28 significant portion of the work accomplished by 2012, the 150th anniversary of the Dakota War of
29 1862.

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31 **FUNDING IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

45 WHEREAS Christians are called by the Gospel to show evidence of our repentance; (Matthew 3:8,
46 10; Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 4:22-32) and

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

49 WHEREAS the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls Christians to reach out to each other and our neighbors
50 in love and compassion, with justice and in peace; (Matthew 25:31-46; James 2:14-26) and

51 WHEREAS citizens of the State of Minnesota have access to resources to learn the history of the
52 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;

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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
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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
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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
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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.