

RESOLUTION to the 2020 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION

Relating to recognition of Indigenous People's Day as part of our Continuing the Journey Toward Healing and Wholeness with Indigenous Peoples established by the Act of Repentance.

Presented by the EPA Conference Committee on Native American Ministries (CoNAM)

WHEREAS, In 2016 The Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference engaged in an Act of Repentance and Healing Relationships with Indigenous Persons. Turning away from our frequent refusal to listen to history from the perspective of Native Peoples, we accept that repentance is a choice to grow in the way we see ourselves. We call the Conference to continue living in a spirit of repentance by exploring a change in how we tell the story of the Americas.

WHEREAS, an accurate history of the Indigenous People of the lands which would later be known as the Americas includes the fact that they were **not** discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1492;

WHEREAS, a true and accurate account of the Americas also includes the habitation of the land by Indigenous Peoples long before Christopher Columbus sailed;

WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus failed to treat the Native People of the Americas with respect, engaging in human trafficking and using his influence to establish a culture of sexual exploitation of Native Americans that continues today;

WHEREAS, he established systems of forced labor which resulted in untold suffering for millions of individuals;

WHEREAS, he established systems that repressed Native American cultural expression and language through forced assimilation;

WHEREAS, he established a culture of exploitation of the earth that continues to dishonor and often destroy God's living creation;

WHEREAS, conversations concerning these facts would lead to setting the historical record straight and to respect the culture, language and traditional life ways of Indigenous Peoples.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, these and other acts can correctly be named as genocide, EPA Conference of the United Methodist Church strongly encourages our clergy and local church leadership to initiate conversations among their membership and the local community leaders to awaken them to the true and violent history of colonialism that led to the annihilation of 96% of the Native population between 1492 and 1900.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, EPA CoNAM will provide and distribute to local churches a "Litany for Indigenous People's Day," designed to honor and express our thankfulness for the gifts and contributions of Indigenous Peoples, to be used in worship on the Sunday closest to the first Monday in October.

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the EPA of the United Methodist Church will join the many other United Methodist institutions and state and local governments with a call to replace the observation of "Columbus Day" with "Indigenous People's Day." A copy of this resolution, signed by the Bishop, Director of Connectional Ministries, and the co-chairpersons of CoNAM, will be sent to the Governor of Pennsylvania.

Person Responsible for Presenting Resolution: Verna Colliver