

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Presented by Advocacy Resource Team

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church recognizes that all of Creation belongs to God and that we are called to be faithful stewards of its bounty (Social Principles: I. The Natural World, paragraph 160 , *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*); and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church has called for an end to environmental racism, in which the effects of environmental pollution disproportionately impact persons from minority groups, especially Native Americans [*The Book of Resolutions 2016, #1025 – “Environmental Racism in the US” (Resolution #1025: 2012, 2008 The Book of Resolutions, Resolution #9: 2004, 2000 The Book of Resolutions; Adopted 1992)*]; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church, through the General Board of Church and Society, is a member organization of Creation Justice Ministries, an ecumenical and environmental advocacy group with a mission to educate, equip and mobilize faith communities to protect, restore and rightly share God’s creation; and

WHEREAS, Creation Justice Ministries has called for ecumenical support of four specific pro-environmental initiatives that particularly impact Native Americans, which are:

- the preservation of Bears Ears National Monument, the first U.S. national monument with a primary focus on honoring the natural, cultural and spiritual heritage of tribes, and managed under the advice of official tribal appointees,
- permanent protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, a site important to the Gwich’in people, a Alaska Native community, for both religious and basic sustenance reasons, which is threatened with commercial drilling that would imperil the survival of both the Gwich-in people and the caribou on which they depend,

- respect for the sovereignty of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, whose tribal treaty rights and drinking water may be undermined by an environmentally risky oil pipeline on their land and with whom representatives of many U.S. religious communities, including United Methodists led by Rev. Bruce Ough, President of the Council of Bishops, have protested the pipeline and defended their rights in solidarity, and
- The Antiquities Act, a law originally passed in 1906 that authorizes U.S. presidents to protect historic landmarks or objects of “scientific or historic interest” on public lands as national monuments, which has been used many times to protect sites important to Native Americans and has been shown to be overwhelmingly popular with American voters.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Peninsula-Delaware Conference of The United Methodist Church support the actions of Creation Justice Ministries to bring environmental justice to Native Americans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Peninsula-Delaware Conference of The United Methodist Church authorizes our Bishop to endorse the positions of Creation Justice Ministries on the above-referenced actions.

Submitted by the Advocacy Resource Team of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference of The United Methodist Church, the Rev. Robert P. Hall, Member

Approved by the 233rd Annual Conference of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference of The United Methodist Church, May 23, 2017, Wilmington, Delaware

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson, Presiding