

UNYAC2015.9—Resolution to Support the Turtle Island Trust and the People of Ganienkeh

Whereas, it has been "resolved that being justified by faith, we will honor as sacred those practices that: call us back to the sacredness of Native people, affirm as beautiful their identity among the world's peoples; lead us into right relationship with our Creator, creation, and those around us; and call us into holy living. We call upon the world, the church, The United Methodist Church, and the people of the United Methodist Church to receive the gifts of Native people as people of God." (#3334); and

Whereas, it has been "resolved, that The United Methodist Church begin a process of healing relationships with indigenous persons to continue through the quadrennium and beyond that necessarily includes such activities as study guides and resources; self-examination, discovering the ongoing impact of historic traumas; confessing our own participation in the continuing effects of that trauma, building relationships with indigenous persons wherever we, the Church, are; building those relationships through listening and being present with indigenous persons, working beside indigenous persons to seek solutions to current problems..."(#3324); and

Whereas, it has been "further resolved, that the General Conference recommends that local churches develop similar statements of confession as a way of fostering a deep sense of community with Native Americans and encourages the members of our church to stand in solidarity on these important issues and to provide mediation when appropriate for ongoing negotiations with state and federal agencies regarding these matters." (#3322); and

Whereas, the people of Ganienkeh and the Turtle Island Trust have made possible, for hundreds of visitors of all ages, life-enhancing learning, and relationship-building experiences. In their minds the Ganienkehagas are there forever. It is our hope to provide this for many generations to come; and

Whereas, the Turtle Island Trust, through the efforts of its trustees, has been a vehicle for peace on all sides; and

Whereas, the "Act of Repentance" requires that the Church will never again remain silent when it is called to speak,

Therefore be it resolved that The Upper New York Conference, representing over 900 churches, with 168,000 members, in light of our Act of Repentance journey, support the people of Ganienkeh Territory and the Turtle Island Trust in their ongoing efforts to establish peace with justice. This Annual Conference session, in light of the urgency of this present historic moment, asks Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, and the Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman, to exercise the leadership required to ensure peace and justice for all by honoring the Turtle Island Trust Agreement. This agreement, which came into being in 1977 through the efforts of then-Secretary of State Mario Cuomo, established the Turtle Island Trust as a tax-exempt charitable land trust through which the people of New York and of Ganienkeh Territory resolved their differences in peace and with dignity for all; and

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent, by the Conference Secretary, to the governor and attorney general of New York State.

Dated: May 30, 2015
Conference Secretary: Rev. Jeffrey Hodge

Presiding Bishop: Bishop Mark J. Webb