Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples

Submitters: Social Justice and Advocacy Ministry Network

Resolved, that the 233rd Convention of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut affirm the actions of the General Conventions of The Episcopal Church expressing solidarity with indigenous peoples particularly resolution 2012-A131 (Appendix A); and be it further

Resolved, that this 233rd Convention of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut commission the Social Justice and Advocacy Ministry Network to organize within ECCT the work specified in General Convention Resolution 2012-A131, in cooperation with, as appropriate, such agencies as The Institute for American Indian Studies in Washington CT, and the offices referenced in Resolution 2012-A131.

Explanation:
Our society needs forgiveness from our brother and sister Indigenous People, because in history, we have tortured them, taken away self-respect, slaughtered them, and stolen their land. They have experienced their families broken up by legal decree, sexual and family violence, high incarceration rates, drug abuse, and loss of spiritual fulfillment, culture, languages, and traditions. Indigenous People are the original inhabitants in what is now the United States. Conservative estimates of their population suggest approximately ten million, reduced to barely 237,000 by 1900.

How does this resolution further God’s mission of restoration and reconciliation with all creation?
This resolution offers reconciliation for the offenses that we in the United States have committed against our brothers and sisters, the Indigenous People. We pray that acts of reconciliation will restore our relationship with them so we may learn from their traditions about protecting the creation, sustaining and renewing the life of the earth. We propose that we respond to needs for services that often have been denied to Indigenous People. In these efforts we will proclaim the Good News of God in Jesus Christ.
Statement of Requirements to Implement
This resolution will require us all to be more honest, and face what has been done to innocent people. It will require us to meet with Indigenous People to ask for forgiveness, and inquire how best we may support them in their needs as a people. We will need to write letters to our Connecticut delegation to Congress, educating them and asking their support. We will need to educate people in Connecticut to recognize the injustice done to Indigenous People in our midst. The Social Justice and Advocacy Ministry Network funding from the ECCT budget which will allow for this work to begin.

Appendix A:
Resolution Number: 2012-A131
Title: Express Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples
Resolved, That the 77th General Convention ask the Presiding Bishop and other representatives of The Episcopal Church to make protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples a priority in joint work with other Provinces of the Anglican Communion, in ecumenical work with other Christian denominations, and in interfaith work with other faith communities; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention reaffirm the 76th General Convention’s repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery, a misguided, unfair, and harmful legal doctrine which the Church helped promote in earlier centuries, a legal doctrine which has been used in English, Continental, and American law to justify the unfair treatment and exploitation of Indigenous Peoples; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention urges the United States government and governments in other countries in which the Episcopal Church has dioceses to review their laws and policies, in consultation with Indigenous Peoples, and to identify and correct those which treat Indigenous Peoples unfairly or which, although neutral in content, result in invidious discrimination against Indigenous Peoples; and be it further
Resolved, That the 77th General Convention direct the Office of Government Relations, in consultation with Indigenous Peoples, to make protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples a high priority in its advocacy about United States foreign policy, including advocacy about trade agreements, human rights advocacy, and international environmental protection; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and corporate offices of The Episcopal Church, with the aid of resources such as "Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery," to reflect upon their history and to encourage them to support Indigenous Peoples in their ongoing efforts to exercise their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights, to continue to raise awareness about the issues facing Indigenous Peoples, and to develop advocacy campaigns to support the rights, aspirations, and needs of Indigenous Peoples; and be it further

Resolved, That in consultation with Indigenous Peoples within their dioceses or Provinces that congregations and dioceses be urged to take tangible steps to help Indigenous Peoples, including:

- Action to preserve Indigenous Peoples' language, history and culture, such as by supporting appropriate linguistic, historic, Bible (and authorized liturgical resources) translation work for language groups into which the Bible and authorized liturgical resources have not yet been fully translated,
- Action to obtain fairer and better treatment of Indigenous Peoples, such as seeking the repeal of unfair laws and policies,
- Formation of partnerships with congregations whose members consist primarily of Indigenous Peoples:

and be it further
Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and corporate offices of The Episcopal Church to support continued use and development of theological reflections by Indigenous Peoples, with guidance from the Office of Indigenous Ministries, Indigenous Theological Training Institute, local Schools for Ministry and seminaries, which promote Indigenous visions of full, good, and abundant life and which strengthen their own spiritual and theological reflections.