

1 **Resolution 2017 - 13**
2 **RESOLUTION TO 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**
3 **Resolution relating to Continuing the Journey Toward Healing and Wholeness with**
4 **Indigenous Peoples established by the Act of Repentance.**
5 **Presented by Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Committee on Native American**
6 **Ministries (CoNAM)**
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the 2012 General Conference engaged in an Act of Repentance service as
9 a first step in calling the church to acknowledge and seek forgiveness for past sins while
10 launching a process of healing relationships with indigenous persons throughout the
11 world.
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13 **WHEREAS**, each annual conference was to hold a service of Act of Repentance in the
14 following quadrennium, during which the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference
15 engaged in an Act of Repentance in 2016 with a list of action steps to continue the process
16 of healing.
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18 **WHEREAS**, many Native Americans in the United Methodist Church supported this action
19 with varying degrees of confidence and hope that these Acts of Repentance would
20 amount to more than a moment of remembrance and recognition of wrongs done.
21

22 **WHEREAS** the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference has made progress but has neither
23 fully met the goals and objectives laid out in the adopted 2012 resolution on responding
24 to the Act of Repentance nor taken the action steps proposed in the 2016 Act of
25 Repentance service as part of the continuing journey, especially concerning the election
26 at the charge conference of a designated person to fulfill the role of local church
27 representative for Native American Ministries.
28

29 **WHEREAS**, in John 1:1-5 (NRSV) the gospel message tells us that, “In the beginning
30 was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the
31 beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing
32 came into being.” And as we heard from Rev. Dr. Thom White Wolf Fassett in his sermon
33 to us, this verse can be summed up in the Lakota phrase “Mitákuye Oyás’iŋ,” all my
34 relatives, meaning to say that we are kinfolk as we serve Jesus. Although we have not
35 understood this historically in United Methodism, his hope for us was that “in the next 40
36 years Native Americans can become an equal partner in the United Methodist Church as
37 human beings who have not been marginalized, who have great wisdom to contribute,
38 and are welcomed because of who they are and their theological history.”
39

40 **WHEREAS**, Native Americans today face significant issues in health care, high suicide
41 rates, desecration of sacred sites by oil and mining companies, contention over water
42 rights, and threats to tribal sovereignty.
43

44 **WHEREAS**, Native Americans are living among us in Eastern Pennsylvania and are in
45 need of support and advocacy.
46

47 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference District
48 Superintendents will work with Eastern Pennsylvania Conference CoNAM and the local
49 churches/charges to identify and elect at each charge conference a representative for
50 Native American Ministries according to the guidelines in the Book of Discipline, 2016,
51 paragraph 654.

52
53 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference CoNAM and
54 clergy will work with local church CoNAM representatives to encourage and develop at
55 least a yearly recognition of Native American contributions to the church through worship
56 services and/or celebrating Native American Ministry Sunday, Book of Discipline, 2016,
57 paragraph 824.6.

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59 **Person Responsible for Presenting Resolution:** Rev. Suzanne Wenonah Duchesne