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Cynthia Kent, Southern Ute Nominating Chairperson, Greater New Jersey Northeastern Jurisdiction Native American Ministries Committee For Release: Immediate Date: June 12, 2021 Contact: Suzanne Wenonah Duchesne <u>nejnamc@gmail.com</u>

The United Methodist Church Northeastern Jurisdiction Native American Ministries Committee joins in the Call To Action put forth by the Native American International Caucus (NAIC) of The United Methodist Church.

June 12, 2021, the Executive Committee of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Native American Ministries Committee joined with the NAIC's Call To Action stated in their Children's Advocacy Letter in response to the announcement last month that the remains of 215 Indigenous children had been found on the grounds of the Kamloops Indian Residential School in Ottawa Canada.

On June 11, 2021, The NAIC sent a letter to the Bishops of The United Methodist Church calling for October 6, 2021, to be "the day that we United Methodists move from remembering to taking action to live further into our commitment of repentance and reconciliation" through A Call to Action.

The three areas for The United Methodist Church to Take Action include:

To uncover the truth about our denomination's role and responsibility in the history to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream cultures, not the least of which occurred by forcibly removing children to boarding schools often operated by religious institutions, including historical Methodism.

To discover the locations and records from the Methodist run boarding schools, provide funding to seek out the names of the students at those schools and their tribal heritage, to search the physical properties for individual or mass graves by whatever means necessary, to comb through whatever records may be found, to make a determined effort to provide surviving family members with the information found, and to vigorously search out, listen to, and collect the oral stories of those family members whose ancestors were impacted by Methodist boarding schools.

To commit time, resources, and money to join with other efforts throughout North America to remedy the historical trauma The United Methodist Church helped create.

The full letter can be found on the NEJNAMC website here: <u>https://www.nejnamc.org/nejnamc-statements-of-</u> <u>solidarity.html</u>