

RESOLUTION 2018 - 23

2 RESOLUTION TO 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION

3 Resolution relating to the reduction of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante

4 National Monuments in Utah

5 Presented by Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference Committee on Native

6 American Ministries (CoNAM)

7

8 WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church has begun a Journey of Repentance,

9 Reconciliation, and Healing with Native People and has demonstrated a commitment to

10 continue the journey as evidenced by resolutions in the 2016 Book of Resolutions from

11 paragraph 3321 to 3334, spelling out action steps to fulfill that commitment to “covenant

12 together with Native People to work toward healing of their historic grief and traumas”;

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14 WHEREAS, these resolutions refer specifically to “American Indian Sacred and Religious

15 Life, Practice, and Location,” and encourage United Methodists to “stand in solidarity with

16 American Indians on these important religious issues and to provide mediation when

17 appropriate for ongoing negotiations with state and federal agencies regarding these

18 matters,” (BOR, page 327);

19

20 WHEREAS, Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah are

21 deemed sacred and held by Native Peoples under the sovereign rights of the Indian

22 nations secured by Indian treaties and agreements with the United States under the laws

23 and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of

24 Indigenous Peoples, and with that consideration, by Presidential proclamation Bears Ears

25 was declared a National Monument under the Antiquities Act on December 28, 2016, as

26 a means to secure permanent protection for these lands and to oppose any attempt to

27 reverse the protection;

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29 WHEREAS, a Presidential proclamation on December 4, 2017, reduced the size of Bears

30 Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah by nearly 2 million

31 acres threatens Native Peoples’ land and sacred sites for the purpose of amassing profit

32 for energy and mining companies by the extraction of fossil fuels and minerals;

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34 WHEREAS, National Congress of American Indians President Jefferson Keel, in

35 expressing his support for the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, has stated that “The

36 original intent of the Antiquities Act was to protect our tribal sacred sites and the cultural

37 objects in those sites. The history of our indigenous ancestors lives in these sacred

38 places. The actions to reduce Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante endangers our

39 freedom of religion, our histories and our communities”;

40

41 WHEREAS, Senator Tom Udall stated in the Congressional Response to NCAI President

42 Keel’s State of Indian Nations address on February 12, 2018, that he is doing all he can

43 in the Senate to “partner with Tribes to protect sacred places for generations to come,”

44 including introducing the Antiquities Act of 2018, after consultation with Tribal leaders and

45 organizations, to “reaffirm the boundaries set forth in the monument designation since

46 1996”;

47

48 WHEREAS, the majority of the people of the United States, major outdoor sports
49 companies, and major conservation organizations support the protection of these
50 monuments and sacred sites;

51

52 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that members of the Eastern PA Annual Conference
53 and local church members are urged to support and advocate for actions to protect these
54 sacred sites by asking members of congress to oppose and seek to reverse the recent
55 action to reduce the size of the monuments and to support companies and organizations
56 that advocate for the preservation of public lands and sacred sites;

57

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a letter stating the position of the UMC and EPA
59 Conference regarding “American Indian Sacred and Religious Life, Practice, and
60 Location” and signed by Bishop Johnson, the Director of Connectional Ministries, and the
61 Co-chairs of EPA CoNAM to be sent to the White House;

62

63 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that all members of EPA Annual Conference demonstrate
64 their commitment to continue the journey begun at the 2016 Act of Repentance and to
65 “stand in solidarity with American Indians” by viewing the State of Indian Nations Address
66 delivered by NCAI President Jefferson Keel on February 12, 2018 at Newseum’s Knight
67 Studios in Washington D. C. and the following Congressional Response by Senator Tom
68 Udall, Senator from Utah and Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs,
69 in order to be more fully in solidarity with Native People in the issues of their lives today.
70 (2018 State of Indian Nations - YouTube.com)

71

72 Person Responsible for Presenting the Resolution: Verna Colliver