



**Native American  
International  
Caucus  
of the  
United Methodist  
Church**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 25, 2022

We are distraught at the recent events in Ukraine. We, the First People of North America stand in solidarity with the indigenous people of the Ukraine as they once again face reprehensible acts of violence from their neighbor Russia and its disregard and denial of their right to sovereign governance. As indigenous people, we understand and denounce all acts of imperialistic expansionism as time and again, native people are those who suffer most desperately from the loss of life, livelihood and land.

Today, we stand with the indigenous people of the Ukraine known as Crimean Tatars, Karaims and Krymchaks. We particularly stand in support of our Ukrainian relatives who have a long and honorable history in North America of standing in solidarity with us, as celebrated in the Native story below.

Today, we urge the people called United Methodists to pray for the people of Ukraine, to stand and speak for their right of self-determination, and to pray for peace.

*Ukrainian floral scarves have become iconic among many Indigenous Communities. Nowadays, you may see these scarves blended into Our PowWow regalia. Some but not all Nanticoke Women call them Noohkom scarves because Noohkom means My GrandMother. The scarves are a symbolic reminder of Our GrandMothers. We carry Noohkom scarves with us into the circle, knowing that Our GrandMothers are always walking with us, especially in our times when we need them the most.*

*Why have Indigenous Women chosen the Ukrainian floral scarf? There is a vast history of trade and social dealings between Indigenous Women and Non-Indigenous Women. The Ukrainian and Indigenous communities often worked closely during significant hardship and famine. Cooperation between Indigenous Communities and Newcomers is a story that has continued to be spoken across Turtle Island. These floral scarves became a symbol of our Matriarchs' strength and hard work.*

*Long ago, when Ukrainian people arrived on Turtle Island, the Newcomers brought beautiful floral-patterned fabrics that were a natural complement to the floral patterns found in our Tribal designs. Our GrandMothers adopted these patterns and worked closely with their new Neighbors to help each other.*

*Noohkom scarves are a symbol that embodies the courage and spirit of Our GrandMothers; women who worked relentlessly to find opportunity and to build relationships and cooperation among families and communities to ensure our survival. Noohkom scarves represent love for one another, passing on our tribal traditions. (see next page for a Ukrainian floral scarf used in PowWow regalia)*

Noohkom Scarf pattern

