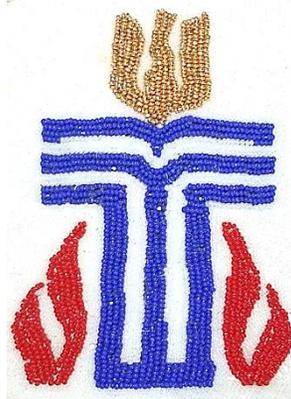


## *Native American Day in the Presbyterian Church, USA*



Native American Day is celebrated in the Presbyterian Church, USA on September 22nd or 23rd (Fall Equinox). You may celebrate the day on the Sunday before or after or on another appropriate day. Worship resources follow.

Since 1994, Native American Day appears on the Presbyterian Calendar as the day to recognize and celebrate the contributions of Native Americans/American Indians to the life of the church and community. The date of September 22nd or 23rd was selected and established the date for Native American Day. Ironically, Fall Equinox is noted on one or the other date. The Fall Equinox has marked “harvest time” for many Native American tribes for centuries and is a time of celebration and preparation for winter.

Native American Day is usually celebrated with a worship service held at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky. Rev. Irvin Porter, Associate for Native American Intercultural Congregational Support has responsibility of planning the service and usually has Native American leaders help with liturgy, preaching and the Sacrament of The Lord’s Supper.

The ninety-five Native American congregations and chapels are located on reservations, in rural areas and two urban congregations. There are sixteen presbyteries and six synods which have Native American constituents in their bounds. Some of the churches are isolated due to location.

Very few ordained Native American clergy still serve these congregations. The churches are dependent upon Commissioned Ruling Elders because they cannot meet the presbytery minimum salary necessary to pay a full-time pastor. Most of these congregations are comprised of low-income Native people so consequently do not have the resources to sustain full-time ministries. The loss of national and mid-governing body mission funding has contributed to an already acute leadership crisis in these churches.

*First Indian Presbyterian Church  
Kamiah, Idaho est. 1871  
(Nez Perce Indian reservation)*



## Did You Know?

- ❖ As of 2021, there are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages. A federally recognized tribe is an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation, and is eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Federally recognized tribes have certain fundamental rights of self-government (i.e., tribal sovereignty) and may receive a variety of federal benefits, services, and protections because of their relationship with the United States. American Indians and Alaska Natives live and work just as other citizens do. Many leave their reservations, communities or villages for to seek education, medical services and employment. The 2010 Census, for the first time, indicated that over one-half of the total U.S. American Indian and Alaska Native population now live away from their tribal lands. The 2020 Census indicates that 78% of Native Americans now live outside reservations and 72% live in urban or suburban locations.  
<https://www.bia.gov/frequently-asked-questions#:~:text=At%20present%2C%20there%20are%20574,Alaska%20Native%20tribes%20and%20villages.>
- ❖ Allotment land: Break up of Indian territories through the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 resulted in land being distributed to individual Native Americans (180 acres). The “surplus land” was sold by the federal government to non-Native buyers.
- ❖ Relocation: A government program relocating Native Americans to urban areas of the country in the 1950’s and early 60’s under the guise of assisting families with employment and education for single adults. Some stayed and others returned to their homelands when the promised jobs never materialized. Often they were given bus fare to the city and a small stipend and expected to support themselves without training for jobs or preparation to live an urban existence. The experiment failed.
- ❖ There are 571 American Indian gaming operations owned by 245 tribes. Many of the Pacts which created the gaming operations require they give-back to surrounding municipalities a percentage of their earnings annually. Some tribes do not have gaming operations. The idea that “all Indian tribes have casinos” is false.  
[https://www.500nations.com/Indian\\_Casinos\\_List.asp#:~:text=Indian%20gaming%20is%20played%20in,are%20owned%20by%20245%20tribes.](https://www.500nations.com/Indian_Casinos_List.asp#:~:text=Indian%20gaming%20is%20played%20in,are%20owned%20by%20245%20tribes.)

Connections and partnerships between congregations and these Native American churches around mission projects have been ongoing for several years and mutually beneficial. Groups have worked together in the local community, help with church building needs and conduct Vacation Bible School. Others have given toward national gatherings for Native American youth, young adults and leadership development opportunities. A better understanding between both cultures has developed as well.

Diversity exists in the languages, cultures, and tribal governments but a common history is their faith journey. Native American Presbyterians love to tell the story and welcome opportunities to do so.

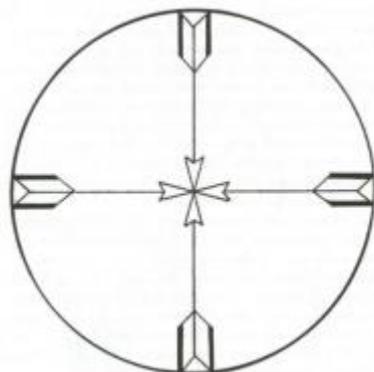
*“May the warm winds of heaven blow softly upon you  
and the Creator make sunrise in your hearts.”  
(Cherokee Prayer)*

Rev. Irvin Porter, Associate Native American Intercultural Congregational Support | [Irv.porter@pcusa.org](mailto:Irv.porter@pcusa.org)  
Puyallup, WA: (253) 740-7180 | Louisville: (502) 569-5331 or (888)728-7228 Ext. 5331  
WEB PAGE: <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/nativeamerican/about-us/>  
FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Native-American-Ministries-PCUSA/232067750278099>

*Rev. Irvin Porter, Associate  
Native American Intercultural  
Congregational Support with  
Members of the Native American  
Presbyterian Women's Conference*



*American Indian Youth Council  
Class of 2021*



## **Celebrating Native American Day Liturgy Resources:**

**Provided by Reverend Irvin Porter**

### **A Call to Worship:**

#### **Christ the Center**

L: From the East, the direction of the rising sun, come wisdom and knowledge. Let us face East (all face East, pause) and let us pray: Enable us, O God, to be wise in our use of the resources of the earth, sharing them in justice, partaking of them in thankfulness. We learn from your creation that life is a sacred circle, of which there is no beginning and no end.

**“We are all related. Lord, hear our prayer.”**

L: Please face center. (pause) From the South comes guidance, the beginning and end of life. Let us face South (all face South, pause) and let us pray: May we walk good paths, O God, living on this earth as sisters and brothers should, rejoicing in one another’s blessings, sympathizing in one another’s sorrows, and together with you renewing the face of the earth.

**“We are all related. Lord hear our prayer.”**

L: Please face center. (pause) From the West come purifying waters. Let us face West (all face West, pause) and pray that the Holy Spirit of God may again breathe over the waters making them pure, making them fruitful. Let us pray: We pray that we too may be purified so that life may be sustained and nurtured over the entire face of the earth.

**“We are all related. Lord hear our prayer.”**

L: Please face center. (pause) From the North come purifying winds. O God, you have been called breath and wind of life. Let us face North (all face North, pause) and let us pray: May the air we breathe be purified so that life

**“We are all related. Lord hear our prayer.”**

*Voices: Native American Hymns and Worship Resources, 1992, Marilyn Hofstra, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN.*

## **A Prayer of Confession**

The circle of love is repeatedly broken because of the sin of exclusion. We create separate circles: the inner circle and the outer circle, the circle of power and the circle of misery, the circle of favor and the circle of denial.

**Forgive us our sins, as we forgive all who have sinned against us.**

The circle of love is broken whenever there is hostility, whenever there is misunderstanding, whenever there is insensitivity and a closed heart.

**Forgive us our sins, as we forgive all who have sinned against us.**

The circle of love is broken whenever we cannot see eye to eye, whenever we cannot link hand to hand, whenever we cannot live heart to heart and affirm our differences.

**Forgive us our sins, as we forgive all who have sinned against us.**

Through God's grace we are forgiven, by the mercy of our Creator, through the love of the Christ, and in the power of the Spirit. Let us rejoice and be glad!

**All: Glory be to the father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be; world without end. Amen.**

*Voices: Native American Hymns and Worship Resources, 1992, Marilyn Hofstra, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN.*

### **The Lord's Prayer (Native American version)**

**O Great Spirit, Creator of the universe, You are our Shepherd Chief in the most high place. Whose home is everywhere, even beyond the stars and moon. Whatever you want done, let it, also be done everywhere. Give us your gift of bread day by day. Forgive us our wrongs as we forgive those who wrong us. Take us away from wrong doings. Free us from all evil. For everything belongs to you. Let your power and glory shine forever. Amen.**

*This version was written by Hattie Corbett Enos, Nez Perce, great grandmother of Rev. Irvin Porter. Gifts of Many Cultures, 1995, Maren C. Tirabassi and Kathy Wonson Eddy, United Church Press, Cleveland, OH.*

## Hymn suggestions:

“We Are One in the Spirit”

GTG #300

“Many and Great, O God are Thy Things”

GTG #21

*Wakantanka / "Many and Great". Words & Music: Joseph R. Renville (1779-1846); This song was written by Joseph R. Renville and first appeared in the "Dakota Odawan", also known as "Dakota Dowanpi Kin" published in Boston in 1842). Of the hymns published in that book, this is the only one for which the original melody is known to have been a traditional Dakota tune. The tune is LACQUIPARLE, French for 'lake that speaks.' This was sung by thirty-eight Dakota as they were escorted to the gallows, at Mankato, Minnesota, on December 26, 1862, the largest mass execution in American history" according to Rev. Sidney Bird, Dakota Presbyterian minister whose ancestor was acquitted of charges by Lincoln. "The Sioux Uprising" began August 17, 1862 after the Dakota had demanded annuities promised by treaty directly from their agent. Traders refused to provide any more supplies on credit and negotiations reached an impasse.*

## Heleluyan: Hallelujah

♩ = 68 Refrain

Hal - le - lu - ya, yah-hay-kah-thle-ez, Hal - le, Ha - le - lu - ya,  
Hal - le - lu - ya, yah-hay-kah-thle-ez, Hal - le, Ha - le - lu - ya.

WORDS: Trad. Muscogee (Creek); common phonetic transliteration by Marilyn M. Hofstra (Choctaw, Chickasaw) © 1992; Eng. paraphrase by Leona Sullivan (Creek) © 1992

MUSIC: Trad. Muscogee (Creek); transcription by Marilyn M. Hofstra (Choctaw, Chickasaw) © 1992

*Voices: Native American Hymns and Worship Resources, 1992, Marilyn Hofstra, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN.*

### ***The Muscogee Creek People***

*The Muscogee (Creek) people are descendents of a remarkable culture that, before 1500 AD, spanned all the region known today as the Southeastern United States. Early ancestors of the Muscogee constructed magnificent earthen pyramids along the rivers of this region as part of their elaborate ceremonial complexes. The Muscogee were not one tribe but a union of several. This union evolved into a confederacy that, in the Euro-American described "historic period," was the most sophisticated political organization north of Mexico. In the early 19th century, the United States Indian policy focused on the removal of the Muscogee and the other Southeastern tribes to areas beyond the Mississippi River. In the removal treaty of 1832, Muscogee leadership exchanged the last of the cherished Muscogee ancestral homelands for new lands in Indian Territory (Oklahoma). Many of the Lower Muscogee (Creek) had settled in the new homeland after the treaty of Washington in 1827. But for the majority of Muscogee people the process of severing ties to a land they felt so much a part of proved impossible. The U.S. Army enforced the removal of more than 20,000 Muscogee (Creeks) to Indian Territory in 1836 and 37.*