



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Congregations within our synod are increasingly adding a land acknowledgement to their worship documents. Congregations, members, and pastors may be called on to help craft land acknowledgments for schools, cities, and counties. There are many resources available to help individuals and groups in this endeavor. Feel free to contact Together Here Ministries for assistance and ideas.

[Ask the Archivist](#) from Paul Daniels. The history of the land on which our congregations are located is often “fuzzy.” Paul Daniels, archivist for ELCA Region 3, helps congregations preserve their history, maintain records, and celebrate their legacy. He may be able to help congregations to understand the history of their church buildings and locations. Paul may be contacted at [pdaniels@luthersem.edu](mailto:pdaniels@luthersem.edu).

[A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgment](#) from the Native Governance Center.

[The Invasion of America website](#) allows anyone to look up treaty history in relation to particular places simply by clicking on a map.

[Land Acknowledgement Guide](#) from the ELCA.

[Native Land Acknowledgment: Processes to Heal, Steps to Restore](#) from Lutherans Restoring Creation.

[Northeastern Minnesota Synod Map](#) This map shows congregation locations by conference as well as reservation boundaries and off reservation communities.

[“Telling the Truth About the Lands we Inhabit,” by Vance Blackfox, Living Lutheran, November 2021.](#)

Vance Blackfox, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, is ELCA desk director for American Indian Alaska Native Tribal Nations.

## SAMPLE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following land acknowledgements are representative of statements adopted by various congregations and church-related ministries. Together Here Ministries does not necessarily endorse any of these and presents them as a resource for congregations seeking to adopt a land acknowledgment statement.

### [Trinity Lutheran Church, Stillwater, Minnesota](#)

Trinity Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the *Očhéthi Šakówin Dakhóta* people, specifically the Wahpekute Nation. We are on Dakota and Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) land. This land holds spiritual and ongoing importance for its original stewards, the Native nations

and all Indigenous peoples of the St. Croix Valley region. We give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

#### [Upper Dublin Lutheran Church, Ambler, Pennsylvania](#)

The land on which our church stands is part of the ancient homeland and traditional territory of the Lenape people. We pay respect to Lenape peoples, past, present, and future and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout the Lenape diaspora.

#### [St. John's Lutheran Church, North Versailles, Pennsylvania](#)

We begin our service of worship by acknowledging and honoring the Indigenous Peoples who have been stewards of this land for hundreds of years.

St. John's occupies the ancestral land of the Seneca Nation whose territory stretched from Niagara Falls to Washington County and from Cleveland to Harrisburg. The Seneca were part of the Five Nation Iroquois Confederacy, which included the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Mohawks. Later, two additional nations were accepted into the Seneca's jurisdiction after being displaced by British settlers: the Lenape, or Delaware, settled in the Lawrenceville area in Shannopin's Town and the Shawnee settled along the Allegheny River near Kittanning.

We recognize especially the leadership of Clan Mother Aliquippa, who was the leader of the Seneca living along the three rivers in the 1740s. By 1753, Aliquippa and her people were living at the junction of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers near present-day McKeesport.

We honor all the Indigenous Peoples of this place and lift up their unique and enduring relationships with this land. We pay our respects to their Elders and reverence their past, present, and future.

#### [Redeemer Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota](#)

We acknowledge that we are living on the stolen ancestral lands stewarded for thousands of years by indigenous peoples. We acknowledge that labor forced upon people of African descent for more than 400 years and of Asian and Latinx descent for more than 170 years extracted their brilliance, energy and very lives while building much of this country. We celebrate the resilience and strength that all indigenous people and descendants of Africa, Asia and Latin America have shown in this country and worldwide. We carry these ancestors with us, and we are continually called by God to do better as we care for each other and our community.

#### [Pilgrim Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minnesota](#)

This land is not just this address. From time immemorial the Dakota people's lives and stories have been woven together with this land. Pilgrim Lutheran Church stands on the ancestral homeland of the Dakota people. They were forcibly exiled from their land starting with the treaties of 1837 and 1851 and were nearly exterminated after the 1862 US Dakota war. We acknowledge the Dakota people, past and present, for their ongoing story and care of this land. We condemn and lament the way colonialism pillaged both the land and the Dakota way of life. Pilgrim Lutheran Church commits to ongoing efforts to recognize, support, and advocate for the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples. Let us take a moment of silence to honor the Dakota people, their heritage and resiliency.

### [American Lutheran Church, Grand Junction, Colorado](#)

We recognize that the land where we worship belongs to God, as does all of creation. We also acknowledge that Ute peoples lived here before settlers of European descent claimed ownership of it and displaced those for whom this land was home. As we worship, let us honor the Creator's continuing presence in this land, lament this injustice in our history, confess our complicity in it, and commit ourselves to just and respectful relationships within our congregation, our community, and all of creation.

### [Lutheran Campus Ministry of Bemidji, Bemidji, Minnesota](#)

We acknowledge that Lutheran Campus Ministry of Bemidji is located on the traditional lands of the Indigenous People of Turtle Island (North America).

These are the ancestral, current and future homelands of the Anishinaabe and Dakota people.

We acknowledge the painful history of genocide, forced assimilation, and efforts to alienate the Indigenous inhabitants from their territory here.

We honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land, retained tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and cultural resilience.

This is a starting point, not an ending point, for our work as Bemidji Lutheran Campus Ministry as we strive to follow Jesus alongside our neighbors of the sovereign federally recognized tribes of the Leech Lake, Red Lake and White Earth bands of the Ojibwe people

### [Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minnesota](#)

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church recognizes that its building stands on traditional Dakota land near *Bdote Mni Sota*, the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers, the center of creation for Dakota people and also sacred to Ojibwe. The congregation acknowledges that this land was taken from Indigenous people by exploitation and violence. Given the deep significance of this sacred ground, as well as its painful history, the congregation recognizes its responsibility to use this land, its building and mission for the work of reconciliation and healing with Native people. The congregation repents of this injustice that continues to harm Native communities and pledges to work for justice, peace and the wellbeing of all creation.

### [St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota](#)

We stand on the homelands of the Wahpekute Band of the Dakota Nation. We honor with gratitude the people who have stewarded the land throughout the generations and their ongoing contributions to this region. We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota Nation, and we wish to interrupt this legacy, beginning with acts of healing and honest storytelling about this place.

### [California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, California](#)

We acknowledge that California Lutheran University resides on the traditional territory of the Chumash, Fernandeano Tataviam, and Muwekma Ohlone people, who trace their ancestry through

the San Fernando Valley, Malibu, Paso Robles, and San Francisco area.

We remember their connection to this region and give thanks for the opportunity to live, work, learn and pray on their traditional homeland. In their footsteps we carry forward their tradition of coming together to grow as a community. We offer our respect to their Elders and to all Chumash, Fernandeño Tataviam, and Muwekma Ohlone people past and present.

#### [First United Church of Christ, Northfield, Minnesota](#)

As a community of faith, we at First UCC Northfield acknowledge that our church was formed on the ancestral homelands of the Wahpekute Band and other bands of the Dakota Nation. Our church began here in 1856 when the Dakota were being forcibly removed from their homelands. With God's help, we strive to repair ongoing injustices and grow toward right relationships with Indigenous people.

We lament the broken treaties and genocide that happened in the Dakota homeland Mni Sota Maçoke and the unjust legacy that persists. We faithfully commit ourselves to interrupt this legacy as part of our pledge to work toward racial justice. We will continue with acts of healing through our commitment to hear stories of this place and those who have lived here for generations, to learn about Indigenous history, current stories, and public policies that impact Indigenous people, and to take appropriate action to begin repairing the injustices done to Indigenous people.