

What is the Walking With Our Indigenous Neighbors [WWOIN] Ministry Team?

The team is a group of lay and rostered synod volunteers who are committed to full implementation of two recent Synod Assembly actions: the 2022 Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and the 2025 Truth and Healing Resolution re: Indian Boarding Schools. Through the recent Synod committee/team restructuring, the WWOIN ministry team has been rechartered by Synod Council to work on the following action items:



- To affirm and advocate for tribal sovereignty.
- To support native people in their processes of healing and development.
- To develop relationships with native communities that are based on equity and mutual respect.
- To celebrate the diverse expressions of God's creation in indigenous peoples and cultures.
- To educate people from our communities about the history, culture, and lives of our indigenous neighbors.
- To show up and be present with tribal communities, in activities and advocacy.

There's so much that could be done – where do we start? Here's what the team determined are ministry opportunities to focus on now:

Team Objectives:

- Publicize and recruit people to attend events in the Keweenaw, Marquette, and elsewhere
- Strengthen connections with robust Native American (NA) studies program/NA student associations at NMU, MTU, and other institutions
- Build companionship between NGLS congregations and tribal communities
- Encourage use of the land acknowledgment across our synod for gatherings and congregations
- Work with synodical leadership on synod assembly events
- Establish/strengthen relationships
- Activate individuals and congregations with indigenous people across the synod footprint, especially in areas around Lac du Flambeau/Vieux Desert, Bay Mills/Sault Tribe, Menominee and Forest Co/WI-Hannahville Potawatomi communities.
- Recognizing we cannot fully un-do harm, we actively seek possibilities for restorative justice, through equitable and just means.
- Continue to work with ELCA and other partners on the Truth Seeking, Truth Telling (TSTT) boarding schools initiative, including exploring divestments and investments

How can the WWOIN ministry team support your congregation's learning and ministry?

The team will provide materials in advance to encourage congregations to mark Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Day in May and the Day of Remembrance for Boarding Schools in September. The team will also continue to provide classes, articles, and information on other issues of concern affecting our relationship with our indigenous neighbors. You can also contact members of the team through the Synod office to provide educational forums, or to speak during worship.