Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, ¶2548.2, allows churches to affiliate with other evangelical or Pan-Methodist denominations by comity agreement, retaining their property, with the approval of district boards of church locations, a majority of conference superintendents, and the Bishop, and,

WHEREAS, ¶2553 allows churches to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church, retaining their church property while also paying apportionments for the preceding and succeeding 12 months and unfunded pension and insurance obligations to the Indiana Conference by 31 December 2023, and

WHEREAS, churches who remain in the United Methodist Church are committed to living out our witness through our Social Principles and we are beholden to our General Conference Resolutions, and

WHEREAS, all church property located in the Indiana Annual Conference lies on land that was taken from Indigenous Peoples by violence or through broken or dishonestly crafted treaties,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that all United Methodist congregations in the Indiana Annual Conference make a one-time gift of 10% of their annual total tithe amount to one of the following tribes or organizations along with a letter of repentance signed by the local church's Administrative Council or equivalent governing body and the appointed pastor or assigned lay minister. Further, all disaffiliations and comity agreements with departing congregations will hereafter include this same one-time payment and act of repentance.

- Miami Nation of Indians of the State of Indiana (headquarters, Peru, IN)
- The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma (Tribal Historic Preservation office in Ft. Wayne)
- Pokégnek Bodéwadmik Nation (several service areas in South Bend)
- Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- American Indian Council, Inc. (Boone County)
- Sullivan County American Indian Council
- Wea Indian Tribe
- Wea Indian Tribe of Indiana
- The National Center for Great Lakes Native American Culture
- Kansas Kickapoo Tribe
- Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa
- Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Delaware Tribe of Indians

Other tribes or organizations may be considered with the approval of INUMC Diversity, Mission, and Justice Team.
**Rationale:**

As Jesus told the parable of the rich man to his disciples found in Matthew 19:16-22 (NIV), we remember that there are many things that can pull our focus from fully serving God. The importance that we place upon our church buildings and, by extension, the very land that they sit upon, has become one such stumbling block. It’s difficult to justify that we are fully serving a Christ that sets us free from sins when we are, quite literally, sitting upon land that was stolen from God’s children hundreds of years ago.

A step we can make was highlighted during the 2016 General Conference of the United Methodist Church in Resolution #3321, concerning Native People and the United Methodist Church. It is acknowledged that the United Methodist Church desires to move forward “on a journey of repentance, reconciliation, and healing with Native People.” (2016 Book of Resolutions, p. 324) In specific respects to section D, "Repatriation of Ancestors and Religious/Sacred Ritual Objects," we are called to show our support by advocating when appropriate and that “Annual conferences and local churches consider identification of land and settling aside of land for the repatriation of American Indian remains." (p. 329)

Understanding the close connection to the land that Native peoples had and continue to have, and also recognizing our Social Principles state “we assert the obligation of society and people within the society to implement compensatory programs that redress long-standing, systemic social deprivation of racial and ethnic persons” ("Rights of Racial and Ethnic Persons"), the least we as the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church can do is to pay back some restitutions for the groups harmed by the colonization of Indiana. This would also be in alignment with our 2016 Book of Resolutions, #3324, "Trail of Repentance and Healing," where it states that “wherever the church is holding land and/or property in trust, consider transferring a portion of that land and/or property or its income to indigenous persons’ projects, and...in conjunction with paragraph 2548.2 (BOD 2012), whenever a conference entity is closing a charge or holds excess land, consider transferring any land and property to an indigenous community;“(p. 334) Our churches, including disaffiliating or exiting by comity agreement churches, have land and assets no longer held to this consideration. By passing this resolution, it ensures that the intentions of our Book of Resolutions are upheld and enacted upon when it comes to furthering the work of reconciliation between the Church and Indigenous persons removed from the land on which our buildings stand today.

**Financial Implications:** No

The resolution calls, in addition to the annual tithe owed to the Conference by all churches in the Indiana Annual Conference, including those disaffiliating and comity departing congregations, for 10% of that annual tithe amount to be sent to a recognized Native American group, as set forth in the resolution. This one-time payment will be made through the Conference office.

As the amount earmarked for Indigenous Peoples is in addition to the annual tithe due the Conference, there is no financial impact on the Conference.
Groups to forward/affirm:
Rev. Annettra Jones Stephens - Diversity, Missions, and Justice Ministries - annettra.stephens@inumc.org
Heidi Harding - Financial Services - Heidi.harding@inumc.org
Teri Crouse - Trustees Chair - teri.crouse@inumc.org
Dr. Betty Hart - Commission on Race and Ethnicity - betty.hart@inumc.org
Linda Madagame - Committee on Native American Ministries - motionwater@yahoo.com
MaryKate Annin - Board of Church and Society - marykate.annin@inumc.org

Signed,
Northwest District Operational Team, Connecting Shepherds, and Others:
Pastor Michelle White, Operational Team Chair David White
Dr. Robert C. Pfaff, Co-Lay Leader Ryan Harrison
Lynn Nelson, Director of Lay Servant Academy Pastor Ronnie Bell
Janée LaFuze, Co-Lay Leader Laurie Klenosky
Janiece Stover
Cecelia Magill
Rev. Dr. Karen Bray, Northwest Clergy Renewal Specialist
Pastor Justin Cason
Pastor Branden Scott
Pastor Wayne Williams
Pastor Tim Powers
Pastor Darin Hendrey
Pastor Nathan Whybrew
Pastor Ben Cassiday
Pastor Wellington Chiomadzi
Rev. Lore Blinn Gibson, Superintendent

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