

## FAQs

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### **What does reparations mean? What does not mean?**

- Our understanding of reparations is walking together in justice. This does not necessarily require money or return of land. The root of the word reparation is “repair” – to mend, put back in order, return to a sound, good, or complete condition. We are referring to the true use of the word.

### **What about reservations and treaties? Is that not enough?**

- Reservations were established as part of treaties that were unethically developed, communicated, and implemented. They were (and still are) regularly changed. Their sacred land goes far beyond what they have been relegated to. An important aspect of those treaties was the reservation of rights to access public lands for the gathering and hunting of first foods. These rights have also been violated.
- The Indigenous way of life depends on the seasonal rounds (following the First Foods by seasons throughout the region, a nomadic lifestyle) for their sustenance, health, cultural life, means of exercise, spirituality etc. Removing any one piece has a cascading affect. The reservation does not allow them to live in a way that keeps their lifeways intact.

### **How is this connected to me?**

- As followers of Jesus, we are called to develop Beloved Community which is to include all people – especially those on the fringes. Indigenous peoples have been put in a fringe position since the arrival of settlers in the Americas. Our call is to honor the dignity of all people and to constantly be moving toward a more just society.

### **What are First Foods?**

- Indigenous peoples traditionally lived a seasonal rounds lifestyle that included hunting and gathering foods from the land – mule deer, salmon, roots, berries, medicinal plants etc.

### **Does the federal government support the tribes and Indigenous people?**

- Tribal Governments have established their own economies which include the redistribution of monies. Bureau of Indian Affairs was set up for purposes of protecting Indigenous people but citizens of tribal nations do not receive money from the United States government.

### **What is the Bureau of Indian Affairs?**

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs’ mission is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives. You can find out more about this at <https://www.bia.gov/>.

### **What about casinos? Don’t they have enough money?**

- Casinos are part of the tribal economy, and the funds are redistributed to the people and to tribal government needs – like police, fire stations, road repairs, health programs, education etc. Just like our taxes. Only 39% of tribal governments run casinos.

#### **Aren't they a sovereign nation?**

- Tribal Sovereignty refers to the legal recognition in United States law. Reservations are recognized as “nations within”. They have their own governments and sovereign powers to make laws, tax, create tribal justice systems, healthcare, housing etc.
- Indigenous Sovereignty is derived from Traditional Knowledge belong to native peoples. It consists of spiritual ways, culture, language, social and legal systems, political structures and relationships with lands and waters. This sovereignty exists regardless of whether the nation state does or does not.

#### **Why are we repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery?**

- This is a continuation of our work with Caretakers of the Land, the habitat restoration at Ascension School and other efforts towards conciliation. Leaders of the Catholic and Anglican Church have already taken steps to apologize to apologize for the assimilation camps (boarding schools). The Episcopal Church has repudiated the Doctrine and Bishop Michael Curry is encouraging these steps in the Dioceses. We are in good company.

#### **Should I feel guilty about this?**

- Guilt ought to move us into action. Don't stay there or let it become shame. It can become fuel for change. We still need to be honest about where we've been though. We can't let ourselves off the hook. This is a reality. We can grieve and hurt. Sometimes evil is done on our behalf. That institutional responsibility is what we are addressing here. This is consistent with what we read in scripture when we find the people of Israel responsible for the sins of their ancestors.

#### **What can I do?**

- Advocate for SB13 Tribal History/Shared History in schools
- Go visit a cultural center
- Check out the website – tons of resources
- Read a book! Watch a documentary.