

Statement of Clergy in Solidarity With Standing Rock
November 3, 2016

We, gathered near the Standing Rock Nation expresses solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples here and of the world and supports the rights of Indigenous Peoples to live in and retain their traditional lands and territories, to maintain and enrich their cultures and to ensure that their traditions are strengthened and passed on for generations to come;

We denounce the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and of our various religious traditions as a violation of the inherent human rights that all individuals and peoples have received from God;

We insist that the State of North Dakota, the Morton County Sheriff's Department and various governments in the world to dismantle the legal structures and policies based on the Doctrine of Discovery and dominance, so as better to empower and enable Indigenous Peoples to identify their own aspirations and issues of concern;

We stand in solidarity with Standing Rock and Tribal / Indigenous people's conviction and commitment that Indigenous Peoples be assisted in their struggle to involve themselves fully in creating and implementing solutions that recognize and respect the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples and to exercise their right to self-determination and self-governance;

We hold our governments accountable and call on states of the world to ensure that their policies, regulations and laws that affect Indigenous Peoples comply with international conventions and, in particular, conform to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the International Labor Organization's Convention 169;

We call on each World Council of Churches member churches and our various faith traditions to reflect upon its own national and religious history and to encourage all parishes and congregations to seek a greater understanding of the issues facing Indigenous Peoples, to support Indigenous Peoples in their ongoing efforts to exercise their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights, to continue to raise awareness about the issues facing Indigenous Peoples and to develop advocacy campaigns to support the rights, aspirations and needs of Indigenous Peoples;

We call upon WCC member churches and our various faith traditions to support the continued development of theological reflections by Indigenous Peoples, which promote indigenous visions of full, good and abundant life and which strengthen their own spiritual and theological reflections.