

The Doctrine of Discovery and its Continuing Legacy Today: Recommended Resources for Congregations

(from the Mission Networking Committee of Santa Fe Presbytery)

The Coordinating Team of Santa Fe Presbytery has tasked the Mission Networking Committee with helping the Presbytery continue the conversation about the Doctrine of Discovery (also known as the Doctrine of Christian Domination) that was begun at the October 2018 Presbytery meeting. To that end, we have produced this annotated list of resources that we recommend to congregations for study by sessions, PW groups, adult Christian education classes, and book groups.

The 223rd General Assembly (2018) of the PC(USA) **urged “the session of each congregation, as well as each mid council, COTE-member seminaries, Presbyterian Women’s groups, and other organizations to confess their complicity and repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery.”**

Second Presbyterian Church (Albuquerque) has already taken action:

“The Session of Second repudiates the Doctrine of Discovery. We confess our complicity in the injustice of the Doctrine and promise to: (1) educate our congregation on the history and implications of the Doctrine; (2) work with higher councils to reinforce proliferation of repudiation to other Sessions and higher councils; and (3) cultivate relationships with Native American individuals and tribes, and especially Native American congregations.”

We encourage sessions to consider taking similar action, and we especially recommend the following four resources for their study of the Doctrine of Discovery:

Doctrine of Discovery: A Review of Its Origins and Implications for Congregations in the PC(USA) and Support for Native American Sovereignty, a report prepared at the direction of the 222nd General Assembly (2016) and approved by the 223rd General Assembly (2018). **Must reading for Presbyterians!** https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/Doctrine-of-Discovery-Report-to-the-223rd-GA-2018-FINALIZED-COPY_As-Approved.pdf

The Episcopal Church Exposes the Doctrine of Discovery is a 14-minute video is intended to inform people about the impact of the Doctrine of Discovery in an effort to respond to God's direction; that the Episcopal Church, "act with justice and...do what is right" (Psalm 106:3, *Book of Common Prayer*), and about the unjust way the Americas were settled, and the on-going consequences of those events. Available free online at: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/video/episcopal-church-exposes-doctrine-discovery>

Doctrine of Discovery: In the Name of Christ is a 43-minute documentary that teaches about the history of the Doctrine of Discovery, its basis in Christian theology, its effects on Indigenous Peoples today, and how we might start to undo it. The film features interviews with Indigenous scholars, leaders and activists from around the world, as well as Christian theologians and pastors. A study guide is available. Available free online at: <https://dofdmenno.org/movie/>

Native Americans, the Mainline Church, and the Quest for Interracial Justice, a book written by David Phillips Hansen. It examines the church's role in helping America heal its bleeding wounds of five centuries of systemic oppression. "A conceptually grounded, pragmatic call to the church to engage with present-day Native Americans around acts of reconstruction (fundamentally remaking relationships) and reparation (repairing persisting cultural, economic, and land-related damage), moving all toward social healing through justice." – Erik K. Yamamoto, University of Hawaii School of Law

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

THE INDIAN PUEBLO CULTURAL CENTER (IPCC)

Gateway to the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico. The IPCC is a world-class museum and cultural center located in Albuquerque, created as a place where Pueblo people can tell their story. Its mission is to preserve and perpetuate Pueblo culture and to advance understanding by presenting with dignity and respect, the accomplishments and evolving history of the Pueblo people of New Mexico. Known for its collection of Pueblo pottery and murals painted by Pueblo artists, the IPCC also offers an exciting schedule of cultural, educational, and community activities including rotating exhibits, events with Native American artists and leaders, hands-on children's programs, and art festivals. Today the IPCC leads the world in educating visitors about the legacy of resilience, accomplishments, and living history of Pueblo people and serves as a vibrant place for people of all cultures to share, learn, and discover. www.indianpueblo.org

BOOKS

An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States, by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Beacon Press (2014). Offers a history of the United States told from the perspective of Indigenous peoples and reveals how Native Americans, for centuries, actively resisted expansion of the U.S. empire. Spanning more than four hundred years, this classic bottom-up peoples' history radically reframes U.S. history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.

Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History, by Joe S. Sando, Clear Light Publishers (1992). *The New York Times* describes it as "the first insider's story of the 800-year history of the 19 pueblos in New Mexico." Sando was a historian from Jemez Pueblo who served as the director of the Institute of Pueblo Study and Research at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and taught Pueblo Indian history at UNM.

Indigenous Albuquerque, by Myla Vicenti Carpio, Texas Tech University Press (2011). Examines the dilemmas confronting urban Indians as a result of a colonized past – and present—and the relationship between the City of Albuquerque and its Native residents, who number about 30,000. The author is a citizen of the Jicarilla Apache Nation and is also Laguna and Isleta Pueblo. She is an assistant professor in the American Indian Studies program at Arizona State University.

Native America, Discovered and Conquered; Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny, by Robert J. Miller, University of Nebraska Press (2006). Miller illustrates

how the American colonies used the Doctrine of Discovery against Indian nations from 1606 forward. Thomas Jefferson used the doctrine to exert American authority in the Louisiana Territory, to win the Pacific Northwest from European rivals, and to “conquer” the Indian nations.

American Indians and National Parks, by Robert H. Keller and Michael F. Turek, University of Arizona Press (1998). Many national parks and monuments have unique stories of the struggle between the rights of Indigenous peoples and the wants of the white settler society. Keller and Turek relate stories of conflict and collaboration, including details of land claims, hunting rights, craft sales, tourism promotion, water rights, and assistance to tribal parks.

Exiled in the Land of the Free: Democracy, Indian Nations, and the U.S. Constitution, Clear Light Publishers (1992). Written by eight prominent Native American leaders and scholars, it is a dramatic recounting of early American history – not from the European point of view – but from an Indian perspective. It traces the U.S. model of participatory democracy to its Native American roots. Farmington Presbyterian Church member Stella Webster says: “This should be our Native American History book!”

The History of White People, by Nell Irvin Painter, W.W. Norton & Company (2010). Guides the reader through more than 2,000 years of history, illuminating the invention of race and how white people came to claim themselves superior to others. The author is currently the Edwards Professor of American History, Emerita, at Princeton University.

Yours, Mine, Ours: Unravelling the Doctrine of Discovery, INTOTEMAK magazine (Special Issue: Fall/Winter 2016), published by Mennonite Church Canada. Over 40 authors from diverse backgrounds – Indigenous and Settler, Christian and Traditional – wrestle with the call to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, what it might mean to Christians across North America, and what it entails for relationships with host peoples and host lands. What role did the Church play in the creation of the Doctrine of Discovery? How was Christian faith and practice used to aid and abet centuries of Indigenous dispossession? In what ways do these old concepts still live, move, and have their being? What are the present-day responsibilities of Settler Christians? What does repudiation really mean? And what are the ways forward . . . beyond repudiation?

Wrongs to Rights: How Churches Can Engage the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, INTOTEMAK magazine (Special 2016 Edition), published by Mennonite Church Canada. Over 40 authors from diverse backgrounds – Indigenous and Settler, Christian and Traditional – wrestle with the meaning of the *Declaration* for the Church. What is the *Declaration*? And how might it gift and reorient Christian faith and practice?

Quest for Respect: The Church and Indigenous Spirituality, INTOTEMAK magazine (Special Issue: Spring 2017), published by Mennonite Church Canada. Over 40 authors from diverse backgrounds – Indigenous and Settler, Christian and Traditional – take up the call to respect Indigenous spirituality, exploring what it might mean to Christians across North America and what it entails for relationships with those peoples and host lands. What is Indigenous spirituality, and why is it critical for Settler Christians to learn about it? What is the history of Indigenous-

Christian encounter? How does spiritual abuse and violence continue today? How might we repair the damage done? And what does genuine respect really look like?

VIDEOS

Surviving Columbus. A New Mexico PBS Production (114 mins.) Peabody Award-winning documentary looking at the European arrival in the Americas, and the 450-years European contact from the perspective of the Pueblo Peoples. Available free online at: <https://www.pbs.org/video/surviving-columbus-ji3nhs/>

First Light (13 mins.) For centuries, the United States government has taken Native American children away from their tribes, devastating parents and denying children their traditions, culture, and identity. *First Light* documents these practices from the 1800s to today and tells the story of an unprecedented experiment in truth-telling and healing for Wabanaki people and child welfare workers in Maine. Available free online at: <https://upstanderproject.org/firstlight/>

Doctrine of Discovery in 7 Minutes (7 mins.) Mark Charles examines the notion of discovery as “a racist, colonial concept that assumes the dehumanization of people of color” and how this concept is incorporated into the founding documents of the U.S. Available free online at: <https://wirelesshogan.com/2017/04/10/doctrine-of-discovery-in-7-minutes/>

NATIVE AMERICAN TELEVISION & RADIO

FNX/First Nations Experience, the first and only nationally distributed TV channel exclusively devoted to Native American and World Indigenous content (www.fnx.org)

KTNN – The Voice of the Navajo Nation -- 660 AM and 101.5 FM (www.ktnnonline.com)

“**Native American Calling**” – Weekdays, 11am-12noon, on KUNM (89.9 FM)

“**Singing Wire**” – Sundays, 12-4pm, on KUNM (89.9 FM)

“**Native Music**” – Mondays, 7-10pm, on KANW (89.1 FM)

WEBSITES

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/racial-equity-womens-intercultural-ministries/gender-and-racial-justice-ministries/doctrine-of-discovery/> -- online resources available from the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

<https://dofdmenno.org> -- Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery: A Movement of Anabaptist People of Faith

<https://yakamamission.org/bent-grass-a-brief-history-concerning-docs-relationship-with-the-doctrine-of-discovery/> -- “Bent Grass: A Brief History Concerning Disciples of Christ’s Relationship with the Doctrine of Discovery,” by David B. Bell of Yakama Christian Mission

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/topics/doctrine-discovery> -- Episcopal Church resources

<https://doctrineofdiscovery.org> -- an educational resource and study group maintained by the Indigenous Values Initiative and the American Indian Law Alliance.

<https://upstanderproject.org/firstlight/doctrine> -- helps *bystanders* become *upstanders* through compelling documentary films and learning resources.

<https://wirelesshogan.com> -- the website of Mark Charles, a Navajo Christian who speaks and writes about the Doctrine of Discovery.