

First Church Seattle / Land Acknowledgment / Nov 20, 2024

Isaac P. Introduction Statement – Nov 17, 2024

Over the past year, First Church has had a subcommittee working to create a land acknowledgement, in both short and long form, something that a church of our tenure and size should've had some time ago. While the short form was provided earlier this year, its intention is to create a unified and momentary time of reflection and meditation during our Sunday Services on our congregation's commitment to being respectful to the land, waters, and to the Duwamish People.

The long form is a concrete mission statement meant to lead our congregation and First Church as an organization forward into making actual steps forward in building a relationship with the Duwamish people. As you read the Long Form, you'll notice that it says that it "is a first step". Our next step will be to create a new committee focused on taking active steps to support these people and lands. If you have a passion, desire, or even a curiosity, I encourage you to volunteer for this group by noting on your communication cards that you'd like to be a part of this group, or by getting in contact with Jackie at First Church.

Short Form (in the bulletin, read aloud by worship leader or by congregation)

We, the members of First United Methodist Church of Seattle (this phrase used only in print, not when spoken), acknowledge that we stand on the traditional homelands of the Duwamish, the first people of Seattle. We honor and respect members of the Duwamish Tribe, past and present, as well as the land and waters we share. May we live consciously and respectfully with one another, mindful of the sacredness of all God's creation.

Long Form (on the website)

We acknowledge that First United Methodist Church of Seattle stands on the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people, specifically on the homeland of Chief Seattle's *dxw'dəwʔəbš* (People-of-the-Inside), the First People of this land, also known as the Duwamish Tribe. The Duwamish are the first indigenous tribe named in the 1855 Point Elliott Treaty. They have hunted and fished, gathered from and tended to these lands and waters for millennia.

We acknowledge that our founding pastor, Methodist missionary Rev. David Blaine, his wife, and other early Seattle Methodists were among the first sustained contact that the Duwamish had with white settlers. We recognize the good will and life-saving generosity extended by the original inhabitants of this land to early members of First Methodist Episcopal Church of Seattle. Regretfully, our spiritual forebears failed to return this generosity of spirit in kind.

We recognize that we as a church were and are participants in the physical and cultural genocide and settler colonialism, which continues to displace Indigenous Peoples and benefit colonial descendants today.

Indigenous contributions and sacrifices are immense, and we acknowledge the ongoing disparities, racism, and political invisibility experienced by the Duwamish and other Indigenous Peoples of the Salish Sea.

This acknowledgment is a first step, but it only becomes meaningful when combined with accountable relationships and informed, deliberate acts of repentance, reparation, and reconciliation. Through this acknowledgement we also recognize the significance of this region's lands and waters for the Indigenous Peoples who continue to live here.

As members of First Church Seattle, we commit ourselves to the work of acknowledging and repenting the past and to building new relationships based on respect, equity, and cooperation. May we live consciously and respectfully with one another, mindful of the sacredness of all God's creation.