

DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY

Whereas, in 2007 the United Nations passed the “Declaration of Indigenous Peoples” which called into question the validity of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery, which for centuries served as “legal” rationale for stealing land and dehumanizing aboriginal peoples, as well as justification for the establishment of boarding schools throughout North America to “civilize” Indian children; and

Whereas, in 2009 President Obama pledged to the Native people the United State's support of the “Declaration of Indigenous Peoples”; and

Whereas, “The Declaration of Indigenous Peoples” seeks to right the historical wrongs through the use of the Papal Bull of The Roman Catholic Church which are official decrees by the Pope sanctioning the seizing of indigenous lands worldwide; and

Whereas, in 1452 the Papal Bull Romanus Pontifex, declaring war against all non Christians throughout the world and sanctioning and promoting the conquest, colonization and exploitation of non-Christian nations and their territories; and

Whereas, in 1453 Spain was given rights of conquest and dominion over one side of the globe and Portugal the other; and

Whereas, in 1823 the Christian Doctrine of Discovery was adopted into law by the U>S> Supreme Court (Johnson V. McIntosh). Chief Justice Marshall observed that Christian

European nations had assumed dominion over the lands of America-upon discovery-
Indians had lost their rights to complete sovereignty as independent nations and retained a
mere right of occupancy in their lands.

Therefore be it resolved, all levels of The United Methodist Church is called to condemn
the Doctrine of Discovery as a legal document and basis for the seizing of native lands
and abuses of human rights of Indigenous Peoples; and

Be it further resolved, that the United Methodist Church will work toward eliminating the
Doctrine of Discovery as a means to subjugate Indigenous peoples of property and land.