

# TRUTH-TELLING

## *Justice for Our Children: Healing for Our Communities*

Fact #1: Native children were forcibly removed by the hundreds of thousands from their homes and put into residential schools, where they were abused physically, emotionally, and sexually. The Carlisle Indian Industrial School (CIIS) in Pennsylvania was the flagship for these “schools” all over the US and Canada. Following attempts of extermination and expulsion from PA, Natives from outside the Commonwealth were also forcibly relocated to the CIIS for assimilation into white society.

Fact #2: The UMC has never accepted responsibility for its role in supporting Boarding Schools for the forced removal of native children which sought to eliminate native languages, culture, and traditions and for the resulting intergenerational trauma.

Fact #3: The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) has identified 367 historically assimilative Indian boarding schools that operated in the U.S. between approximately 1870 until 1970. However, NABS has only been able to locate records from 38% of the boarding schools that we know of.

Fact #4: The Native American Boarding Schools were a form of genocide. The bones of over 1,000 children have been found in mass graves owned by church run schools in North America, with some as young as three years old, have been found. As the tally of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, which is already 10 times the national average, grows; and as the echoes of historical trauma toward our children, as forced removals continue to this day, reverberates throughout Native American communities in North America, and the call to address the horror of abuse and the consequence of genocidal policies is once again brought to the forefront.

# CALL TO ACTION

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Take the lead of Rev. Dr. Allen Buck, director of the GNW Circle of Indigenous Ministries, who suggests taking the following actions as congregations:

1. Learn about the local indigenous people(s) in your context. “Strive to be real allies with Indigenous people(s) and start by uncovering the truth about our own complicity in genocide,” Buck said.

Read through the list of Indian boarding schools in the US, paying attention to the places where you have lived and worked.

Watch the video of UM leader Rev. Chebon talking about residential schools. (list and video linked at url below)

2. Find creative ways to join your voices with all those calling for transparency and justice for children and their families subjected to the horrors and brutalities of residential boarding schools. Help us to expose the places where our “missions” (past and present) insist Indigenous peoples reject their own language and cultural practices.

Remember and raise awareness by wearing orange: September 30, October 6, and today, October 10 are all days that we as Americans and United Methodists have been asked to wear orange. You can change when you get home or mark your calendars for next year.

Promote equity and justice for Native Americans in both church and society. Tell Congress to support Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policy - sign the electronic letter by the General Board of Church and Society, link at the url listed below

**Links are available at [redmondumc.org/healing-justice](https://redmondumc.org/healing-justice)**