



OKLAHOMA INDIAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Statement of Bishop Merrill and the OIMC Cabinet

November 6, 2024

To the faithful saints in the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference of the UMC,

During this long and grueling campaign season, our differences have been highlighted to the point of a dangerous division that has created distrust, confusion, anger and, in some instances, even hate. With the election behind us, our invitation is to reconstruct the bridges where they have been burned and extend our hands in peace. The United Methodist Church in Oklahoma seeks reconciliation and hope amid broken relationships and despair.

Regardless of your feelings about the results of the elections, this is a time to seek Christ's way of peace. It is a time for us to stand out in our communities as unique and different, as representatives of Christ's love, truly seeking the best for our neighbors. In the words of Paul in Philippians 2:3-4, our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to lay aside any selfish purpose, regarding others with humility, and looking not to our own interests but to the interests of others.

Some in our body are rejoicing and relieved today. Others are grieving, confused, or afraid. In every case, our task is to pray, to bring love, and to take up the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

May we do so, in the spirit of John Wesley, who reminded us to avoid harm, to do good and to stay in love with God.

Grace and peace,

Bishop Laura Merrill
Rev. Margaret Johnson
Rev. Mike Svitak
Rev. Sharon Yeahquo
Rev. Donna Pewo