

Grace Notes

August 2025

*"She bore a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been an alien residing in a foreign land."
(Exodus 2:22)*

As we move through our summer worship series on Moses, I find myself continually going back to Midian. Maybe being drawn to Moses in Midian has something to do with my own search for identity and understanding who I am over the past two years.

Moses was in Midian because he didn't know who he was. His actions before fleeing to Midian reveal a person having an identity crisis. Someone who is unsure and insecure about themselves either acts with bravado and aggression like Moses did with the Egyptian that he ultimately killed. Or insecurity will overwhelm them, and they shut down like Moses did when confronted by the Hebrew.

When someone isn't clear about who they are (their priorities, values, and purpose) it is very difficult to act decisively or effectively. Potential decisions and actions are privately questioned. Decisions and actions implemented are doubted. When someone questions a decision or action, regardless of how innocent the question is, the person being questioned can become more hesitant and unsure.

My point is this. Are we, our churches, in the midst of an identity crisis? Let me offer some questions to consider.

1. Do we do things out of impulse? Moses' actions toward the Egyptian were impulsive. They may have originated from a sense of right and wrong. But they didn't originate from Moses' identity. If they had, Moses would have been more secure in himself and recognized that killing the Egyptian was not the best way to make his point. Are we doing things that are the correct to do, but we're not really taking the time to plan and prepare so that we are most effective in accomplishing our goals? Do they originate from our identity, or do we do them because it's what we think we should be doing?

2. Do we not act or act indecisively, because we are uncertain about what to do? Moses doesn't act when challenged by the Hebrew man, because he didn't know how to act. Instead of acting, Moses reacted. He allowed the Hebrew man to define his identity. When we are faced with a challenge, an unexpected repair bill, lower offering numbers, or a daycare closing for example, are we decisive in our actions or are we reactionary? Do we allowing the challenges we face to define us?

I wonder if some or most of the challenges we face are because we are unsure of who we are. Perhaps we are even a little afraid to find out who we are. I don't have answers to these questions. I'm still working to understand who I am. But I know this. My hope is in this. The broken and lost man who sat down by that well in Midian, through God's grace and work, discovered his identity as the great prophet, deliverer of people, and law giver. I truly believe and trust that God has a plan for us. For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). It probably won't look like the plan we want or be an easy plan, but it will be the right plan because it's God's plan.

Think about it. Pray about it! I hope to worship with you soon.
Pastor Kevin

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Office Hours: Tues. 11-4, Thurs. 11-3, Fri. 11-4

Sunday School: 9:30am
Worship: 10:45am

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Announcements

Election Day - August 5th

**EVERY
VOTE** 
COUNTS.
DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

Don't forget to vote on August 5th!

If you're not sure where your polling place is or you have questions about who will be on your ballot this year, you can find that info at www.vote411.org.

You can find this website by typing the web address or by using your phone camera to scan this QR code.



What is charge conference?

Over the next month or so, you will begin hearing about an upcoming event known as "Charge Conference." Some of you may be unfamiliar with exactly what that is. So, let's take a minute to explain what this is.

First, a charge refers to the church or churches a pastor is appointed to. In our case, a charge consists of Crestview, Grace, and Pastor Kevin. Every fall, a charge conference is held for each charge. The charge conference meeting is led by the district superintendent and includes the pastor and members of each church's administrative council. The primary responsibilities for a charge conference are to approve the officers and positions within each local church for the upcoming year, set salaries and compensation for the pastor, review and evaluate the ministries of each local church on the charge, and review membership records. A charge conference is required by the Book of Discipline to be held annually. It offers important connections between the churches, the district superintendent, and the annual conference.

If you have questions, please talk with Pastor Kevin.

Silence Is Complicity: A United Methodist response to Trump's call to revive racist mascots

By Bishop David Wilson Great Plains Episcopal Area, the first Native American elected as episcopal leader.

In 2020, we celebrated a long-overdue victory for Indian Country. After decades of tireless advocacy by Native peoples and allies, the Washington NFL team retired its deeply offensive and racist name. It was a watershed moment—a glimpse of what justice, dignity, and truth can look like. But now, in 2025, we find ourselves once again confronting harmful rhetoric and revisionist attempts to bring back those names under the guise of nostalgia and “tradition.” The recent effort by President Donald Trump to bring back the former names of the Washington football and Cleveland baseball teams is more than political — it is a reawakening of racism and trauma for Native Americans.

As United Methodists, we are called to do better. Our faith requires us not only to walk humbly with our God but also to act justly and to love mercy (Micah 6:8). This moment demands our attention, our voice, and our witness.

The use of Native American imagery and names as mascots has always been about power—not honor. These mascots reduce living, breathing cultures and sacred identities to caricatures. They are tools of dehumanization, not celebration. From elementary school fields to NFL stadiums, they send a message that Native people are relics of the past, frozen in stereotype, unworthy of dignity.

Some may ask, “Why does it matter?” It matters because our children are watching. In 2013, the Oneida Nation commissioned a study showing that Native youth who are exposed to these stereotypical images experience a decline in self-esteem, in their sense of community, and in their belief in their own potential. These images cause real psychological harm. And for non Native audiences, they reinforce damaging assumptions and biases. When the church is silent, it becomes complicit.

The United Methodist Church once recognized this truth. For years, our Book of Resolutions stated clearly that no churchwide meetings should be held in cities that use offensive Native mascots in professional sports. That resolution reflected a desire to stand with Indigenous peoples against a tide of misrepresentation and harm. While that language was removed in the 2016 edition, the intent behind it must still guide us. We also passed a resolution at the 2012 General Conference mandating us to be in “Healing Relationships with Indigenous Persons.” This resolution recognizes the need to “turn away from patterns of paternalism, cultural misunderstanding, and historical violence” and calls our Church to enter into intentional relationships of respect, listening, and accountability with Indigenous communities. This commitment is not symbolic—it is a sacred covenant rooted in repentance and repair.

In alignment with this commitment, Book of Resolutions ¶ 4262 declares: “Therefore, be it resolved through this action of the General Conference, The United Methodist Church calls upon all general agencies and related organizations to be intentional about raising awareness of the harm caused by some sports teams through the use of mascots and/or symbols promoting expressions of racism and disrespect of Native American people.” (Adopted 2016, Readopted 2024)

Indigenous folks understand that there is no “me” or “singular” in what we do in this world. When decisions are made in tribal communities, it is for the good of all people. While the dominant society might say, “look out for number one,” our communities look out for the good of all.

Throughout history, decisions with Indigenous tribes have been made with the entire community in mind. There is not a “oneness” but rather a concern for all of the people and humanity. Even in the modern context, there is a responsibility to care for all people—inside and outside of the tribe, village, or nation. It is the concept that we are all in this together; that includes how we care for one another, look out for others’ needs, take care of the environment, and look ahead to the future with all in mind.

The apostle Paul writes in Philippians 2:4, “Care about them as much as you care about yourselves,” and in verse 5, “think the same way that Christ Jesus thought.” Indigenous communities have long practiced this kind of collective care. The Church has something to learn here—not just about Native resistance to injustice, but about Indigenous ways of being that embody Christ’s love.

We cannot afford to be neutral now. What clearer example of public racial harm exists than the forced return of a racial slur to professional sports teams? In recent years, some of our denominational decisions have taken us to cities where teams like the “Braves” and the “Chiefs” continue to market Native identity as costume and commodity. While I acknowledge the educational efforts that have accompanied these gatherings, I also believe we must revisit our earlier conviction: We must not reward the commercial dehumanization of Native peoples with our presence or our dollars.

This is not just a political issue. This is a spiritual issue. The misuse of Native identities is part of a much larger story — a story of erasure, of colonization, and of broken treaties. If we are serious about healing relationships with Indigenous peoples, then we must also confront the historic and ongoing role of the church in these wounds.

I urge our local churches, annual conferences, and denominational leaders to:

1. Speak out publicly against the reintroduction of racist mascots and images, particularly when they impact professional sports teams.

2. Recommit to the spirit of our former resolution by avoiding national meetings in cities whose teams continue to use offensive mascots.
3. Support and amplify Native voices — especially youth — who are courageously telling their stories and standing for dignity.
4. Educate congregations about the real harm caused by mascots and the broader legacy of racism against Indigenous peoples.
5. Include Indigenous theology and history in church curricula and worship resources—not as an afterthought but as part of the fullness of God’s creation.

What gives me hope is that more and more people — inside and outside the Church — are beginning to understand. We’ve seen schools, colleges, and even entire states take meaningful steps to remove racist mascots and dehumanizing imagery. The Cleveland baseball team retired “Chief Wahoo” in 2018. These may seem like small gestures to some, but to Native communities, they are powerful signs that change is possible when people listen, speak up, and act.

But this change cannot be left to others. It must include the Church. If we, as United Methodists, choose to remain silent in moments like this—when our Indigenous brothers and sisters are being mocked, commodified, and erased—then our silence becomes complicity. The gospel calls us not to comfort, but to courage. Not to neutrality, but to justice.

We cannot change the past, but we can decide what kind of Church we will be today. Will we be one that quietly allows harm to be done, or one that boldly lives out Christ’s love by standing with the marginalized? Let us be clear in both word and witness: the dignity of Native peoples is not up for debate. In this moment, may we choose to be a Church that speaks truth, acts with compassion, and refuses to be silent in the face of injustice. That is how healing begins.

Thank You from Lowell & Sherre Johnson

Lowell would like to thank our church family for your love, concern & upmost your Prayers, while he’s had Chemo & Radiation the past few months, for his Liver Cancer. Right now, he’s taking a break, waiting for the treatment to become effective. He’ll have a PET scan mid-Sept. & consultation with his team of KU physicians to see if surgery is the next option. Please continue to put him on your prayer list.



Birthdays

Joyce Swenson	8/3
Shirley Edgerton	8/5
Nancy Ott	8/7
Kerrie Bacon	8/9
Martin Hale	8/18
John Swihart	8/23

Anniversaries

Kerrie & Loren Bacon	8/2
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August Fellowship List

August 3rd:	Dave & Claire Roth
August 10th:	-----
August 17th:	Church Meal
August 24th:	Kerrie & Leona Bacon
August 31st:	Jane Roth

Please sign up any time! The sign up sheets are on the bulletin board next to the office. Right now you can sign up for any open Sunday for the months of September, October, and November!

Scripture Readings

August 3

Hos 11:1-11
 Ps 107:1-9, 43 (UMH 830)
 Col 3:1-11
 Luke 12:13-21

August 10

Isa 1:1, 10-20
 Ps 50:1-8, 22-23 (UMH 783)
 Heb 11:1-3, 8-16
 Luke 12:32-40

August 17

Isa 5:1-7
 Ps 80:1-2, 8-19 (UMH 801)
 Heb 11:29-12:2
 Luke 12:49-56

August 24

Jer 1:4-10
 Ps 71:1-6 (UMH 794)
 Heb 12:18-29
 Luke 13:10-17

August 31

Jer 2:4-13
 Ps 81:1, 10-16 (UMH 803)
 Heb 13:1-8, 15-16
 Luke 14:1, 7-14

The deadline to submit information for the Grace Notes or calendar for September 2025 will be August 22nd. Anything submitted after that date won't be guaranteed a place. If there is an emergency addition please let the office know ASAP.

August

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 6:30pm: NA - #3	2
3	4 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	5 Election Day 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	6 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	7 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	8 6:30pm: NA - #3	9
10 2:00pm: SPRC Meeting - Crestview Parlor	11 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	12 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	13 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	14 9:30am: Coffee with the Pastor - Café Quetzal 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	15 6:30pm: NA - #3	16
17	18 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	19 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	20 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	21 9:00am: Senior Day Out 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	22 6:30pm: NA - #3	23
24	25 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	26 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	27 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	28 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	29 6:30pm: NA - #3	30
31						