

RESOLUTION TO CHANGE THE RACIALLY DEMEANING NAME, MASCOT, AND IMAGERY OF THE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE TEAM

WHEREAS, all human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1: 27);

WHEREAS, Jesus calls us to love one another as he has loved us (John 15: 12-17);

WHEREAS, Paul admonishes us to work for peace and mutual upbuilding (Romans 14: 18-19);

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ is committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination ;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ adopted at General Synod 18 (1991) a resolution condemning negative stereotyping of Native Americans ;

WHEREAS, the use of racist imagery is an affront to basic human rights, undermines basic human dignity, and has a negative impact upon self image, self awareness, and self esteem ;

WHEREAS, the use of racist language and stereotypes continues to exploit and degrade Native American culture;

WHEREAS, the abuse of Native American symbols, such as the headdress and sacred pipe, for entertainment and profit is insensitive, insulting, and an affront to Native American spirituality and is, therefore, unacceptable;

WHEREAS, not only many professional, semi-professional, amateur, collegiate, and high and grade school sports teams throughout the United States but also (and particularly egregiously) the highly visible professional football team located in our nation's capital still employs racially derogatory and demeaning symbols, mascots, and names;

WHEREAS, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "redskin" as a "usually offensive" term to describe American Indians and this term, when used in reference to Native American cultures and people, has a history of use as a pejorative and insulting name ;

WHEREAS, the term "redskins" would not properly be used by a person when addressing a Native American and should not be used to market a professional sports team;

WHEREAS, the use of the term "Redskins" for the team mascot and nickname of the Washington National Football League team is offensive and hurtful to many Native Americans and causes direct harmful effects to the public health and well being of the Native American population ; and

WHEREAS, every major Native American organization, along with hundreds of clergy, churches, civil rights organizations, media outlets, sports writers and journalists, authors and elected officials (including the President of the United States), has voiced support for changing the team name;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the National Football League's Washington franchise to change its team name and to refrain from the use of any images, mascots, or behaviors that are or could be properly deemed harmful or demeaning to Native American cultures or peoples;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ will communicate in writing this resolution to the owner of the Washington National Football League team, Daniel Snyder, and to the NFL Commissioner, Roger Goodell, and to the NFL Players Association, DeMaurice Smith, Executive Director;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ will communicate this resolution to the various conferences, affiliated and associated ministries, and instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ, and will proclaim it to the wider public through social and other media;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges individual churches and members of the United Church of Christ to communicate their concerns regarding this matter to both the Washington National Football League team and the National Football League by writing to:

Daniel Snyder
Owner
Redsk*ns Park
21300 Redsk*ns Park Drive
Ashburn VA 20147-6100
703-726-7000

Roger Goodell
Commissioner
National Football League
280 Park Avenue 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017
212-450-2000

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges individual churches and members of the United Church of Christ to join a boycott of games played by the Washington National Football League team and not wear, display, or purchase any items with the Washington National Football League team logo until the name changes;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ supports the Oneida Indian Nation's "Change the Mascot" campaign and will contact its staff to determine the best means of support and solidarity; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon other sports teams to eradicate the use of names, images, mascots, and behaviors that are or could be properly deemed harmful or demeaning to Native American cultures or people.

FUNDING

The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.